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VERMONT'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER JANUARY 16, 2014 VOL 16 NO 118

ANDY 'A-DOG' WILLIAMS

August 30, 1975–December 26, 2013

PAGES 21, 22, 23

PRIVATE LESSONS

PAGE 16

A Vermont public school converts

ELVIS IN THE HOUSE

PAGE 26

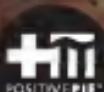
A King's life in South Burlington

WIN SMITH'S LIGHTNING

PAGE 26

Sugarbush owner pens memoir

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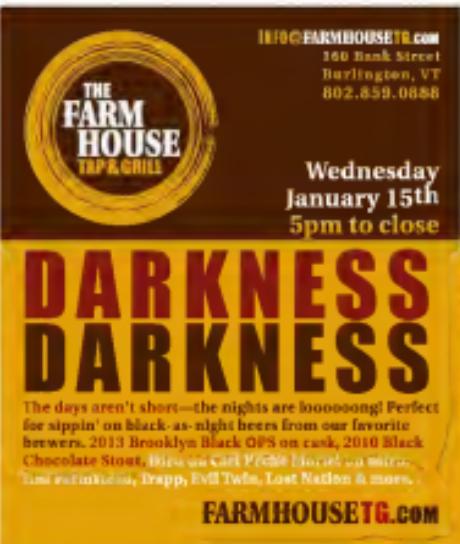
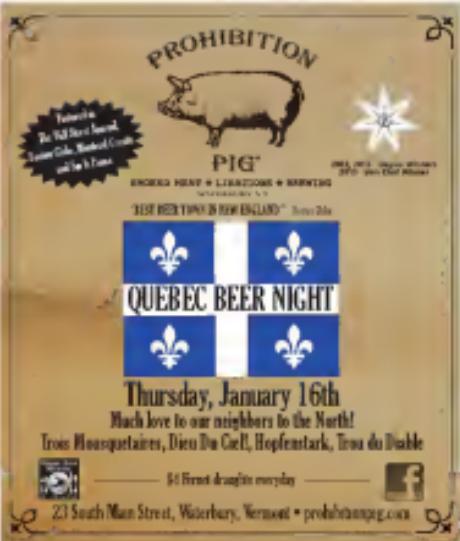
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## THE GOVERNOR IS IN



PHOTO BY JEFF COOK

It's been more than 10 years since a sitting governor visited Burlington to make a speech. By offering himself up to lawmakers on Tuesday, Gov. Peter Shumlin was granted not only to address problems with the Vermont Health Connect website but also to re-enter his pool of publicly funded state-payer health care.

Lawmakers, though, the 2013 session was more perfunctory than helpful for day-to-day management, one announced that Commerce Secretary Lawrence Miller will also chair the next three executive, Kathryn Pizzetti reported from the Seven Days Office Monday.

Shumlin also announced that an independent third party will review Vermont Health Connect's rollout, with the goal of defining a better future projects. Which is to say: single payer health care.

"Vermonter's know that in the long run reform is much more than a website," he told lawmakers on the first day of the 2014 legislative session. "Vermonter's don't care who is in or around the entire state,

but they want us to make sure some insurance has still not received payment cards."

While noting that Vermont had done better than many states, Shumlin added the association reward Vermont Health Connect with a \$100,000 grant of "extra time" and ultimately took responsibility for the system's shortcomings, including the website.

Following his address, Sen. Chris Agen (D-Arlington) pressed Shumlin on-line to provide a quick fix. The governor avoided the central line between supporting the Affordable Care Act and attacking it, and Vermont, from the front-line health care reform till

"Now, who should have to dig up health care reform-ready that way," he said. "I was just speaking against the Affordable Care Act when I say the cause. We start with it, we start past it, it won't be our view of reform and what I just outlined is. So let's do it right."

and our no-threshold  
opt-in."

Lawmakers will be  
working on single-payer  
legislation in the coming  
years. In the meantime,  
Vermont Health Connect  
is meant to provide an  
easy tool for obtaining  
health insurance. Its  
status has done it anything  
but smooth.

In the meantime,  
the October 1 go-live date  
for the new state  
single-payer  
Healthcare coverage  
is off the table. But the  
expensive system — for  
which it is meant to cost a  
little over \$84 million  
initially with 2014 — has  
failed to function in  
its designed ways. Some  
have tried to get online  
but were unable to make  
it work.

For those people and no others, some insurance  
had still not received payment cards.



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up of two parts: the  
"Burlington" and  
"the rest." The  
35-year-old — rural  
area troubling  
answers about the  
perchlorate levels



**SECTION  
187**  
A Vermont man  
allegedly ran away  
from jail to escape  
from his wife.  
Fueled by  
harassment with  
harassment? Not  
a good friend.

58

"that's how  
much lower the  
temperatures  
increased  
below zero  
during the  
four days of  
January in Burlington," according to the  
National Weather Service. *—BRIANNA*

## TOP FIVE

SELECTED FROM THE TOP 50

- 1 "The Best Things in Life Are In Vermont" Food in 2013 by Alice Lichtenstein Greenblatt. The 10 food stories that our 2013 readers liked the most.
- 2 "A Vermont Food, Night Guide to Burlington in 2013" by Courtney Cook. Helped you plan a vacation? *—BRIANNA*
- 3 "2013: The Year in Logistics" by Carl Hirsch. The best local beer wine, craft breweries and more.
- 4 "Recapping the Top Vermont Made Recordings of 2013" by Jim Belote. Counting down the best of a great year's local music.
- 5 "Best Bits of 2013: Business Books" by Alice Lichtenstein. The business books that got the most buzz in 2013.

### tweet of the week:

RT @VermontGinger

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2000 miles in the car,  
but not the road.

According to our sources  
@VermontGinger



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semi-professional photographer, went to every single library to gather the information. She still has requests for copies of the book.

Lon Wiering  
APRIL

#### IN THE DRINK

Thanks for picking my two favorite lithiums in 2013 ("The Year in Liquids," December 28). I stumbled into Sam's Roots, based by the bar's very sonorous name, on a opening night and of course ordered the smoked Negroni. I wanted to cry, it was so perfect: the copper cup (is it really copper? What!), the big, very lip ice cube, the strong, leathery stout, the delicate, fruity finish. (I just had another one on New Year's Eve. It will make you smile — trust me. If at dessert, the responsible bartender will find the perfect thing for you — just ask.)

And Edan in Cider's sparkling dry cider! Of course, I am biased: I do work at the NEK Tasting Center in Newport, but truly this was the best I tasted in Vermont this year — even better than my one, several hours apart, cider. You guys have great taste!

Calista Yannasakis  
ESTATE AGENT

#### VICTIOUS CIRCLE?

I enjoyed your article about Winooski Circle Arts and wanted to update you on their status ("A Winooski Pop-Up Art Market Sickerly to Stop," December 16). I was just there the other day and was told they are getting locked out of the building on January 18. Seems that the out of state landlord wants a lot more than they can afford and basically told them to move out ASAP. Worst of all, there really isn't anywhere for them to go and very little time to find something. So Winooski Circle Arts is not settled in to stay after all — yet another casualty of greedy development in Vermont. Sad.

David Cooper  
BURLINGTON

**Editor's note:** WCA co-owner Jim Cowen tells us, in the contrary, that a new location is very likely — and in Winooski. As of press time, we're waiting to hear where that will be.

#### LEAHY'S F-35 SPIN MACHINE

[See "Plane and Not So Simple: Who Spent How Much Arguing For and Against the F-35," December 13; On December 8, 2013, following the F-35

decision announcement, the backslapping between Sen. Leahy and his supporters had barely stopped when the spin machine started up.]

The first year span was Leahy's comment that he had spoken with "Democrats and senators and congressmen" of F-35 opponents. One of the most shameful aspects of the hearing decision process was Leahy's refusal to meet personally with those who would be impacted, in a denunciation of his responsibilities to Vermonters, despite the United States Air Force's dire predictions of harm to residential neighborhoods. So it comes as a total surprise to me and many others opposed to the basing decision that he has met with "Democrats" of all. (Leahy's office refused a request to confirm names and dates of those meetings.)

The next spin was when Leahy spoke of the president's "grassroots campaign." But as Kevin Reilly's reporting revealed, there were huge donations of dollars and great political and business pressure exerted through some of the most powerful private and nonprofit organizations in the state, including the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation. These business interests applied enormous influence to minimize, dismiss and turn the public's attention away from the environmental damages from the F-35s that have been predicted by the USAF.

Grassroots means "pertaining to the common people, especially as contrasted with the elite." Surely the pre-F-35 eraisse that was bought, paid for and delivered by the corporate and political interests in our state doesn't deserve such a title.

Edwin Andriek  
Vermont

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# the MAGNIFICENT

MUST SEE, MUST DO THIS WEEK

COMPILED BY CATHRYN CORR

FRIDAY 10

## KEEPING THE BEAT

When it comes to instruments, the drummers of **Recycled Percussion** aren't picky. Using objects ranging from industrial parts and power tools to buckets and metal cans, the nationally recognized group creates a unique musical experience. Known for live shows that meld demanding physical performances with awe-inspiring props and visuals, the ensemble delivers a big sound.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING  
ON PAGE 48

①



②

THURSDAY 09 - SUNDAY 12

## Packing Heat

Let's face it: the recent cold snap has put even the most devout winterbeaters to the test. At plenty of winter solstice events, the **Spice in Winter Fest** (a musical travel series) uprooted from New Mexico with a weekend of Cajun festivities. Authorize extra complement performances by famed musicians including The Reivers, fiddler Bruce Melsky and others.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 36  
SPECTACULAR ON PAGE 48  
BROOKLYN LISTING ON PAGE 48

③

④

③

SATURDAY 11 &amp; SUNDAY 12

## Pawsitively Good Time

Remember when Pansies? Here for More Dogs? Head to the Vermont Fancy Fido Fest Cat Show where purringly perky purrs and paws where the action dedicated owners — many of whom dress their feline campers in canary — offer a glimpse into this world with the Purée of Breeds.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 48

④

ONGOING

## In Sight

For **Tom Hartman**, time is money. Time, still, is the most important ingredient for the 70-year-old inventor of the *Tom Hartman's Ingot Camera*, a handheld digital camera that takes 10-second exposures. On view at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, the workstation also includes the use-of-digicam, which is a spelling mistake on a digital camera and facilitates capturing incredible details from great distances.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 48

⑤

SATURDAY 11

## Trail Mix

The **Trapp Family Lodge Nordic Center** has lots of some of the region's most pristine cross-country skiing — including the historic route up to *Timber Pasture Cabin*. Construction is in full swing, so visitors will be a part of the fun as they learn the ingredients for the famous *Roastie in the Cabin*, where competitors strip on their backs for a six-second

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 48

⑥

SUNDAY 12

## All Keyed Up

The Boston-based **Keyboards** (the playing at *Keyboards Jing* — an on-call medical service of a high order) — The Internationally acclaimed, award-winning performer visits the Middlebury College's student office programs of *Residence* era results by *Blind and Deaf* (most not performed on the schools' recently acquired Steinway concert grand piano).

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 48

⑦

FRIDAY 10 &amp; SATURDAY 11

## Culture Clash

Little is known about Ayahuasca's indigenous Ayahu people, who are struggling to preserve their heritages in the modern world. In *Fire-Syste* — a *Myth of the Ayahuasca* — *Indigenous* (a 2006 film) uses a surrealistic language and traditional *Indigenous* culture to bring Ayahuasca to life and introduce audience members to this culturally rich world.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 48

Watch something LOCAL this week.

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FAIR GAME OPEN SEASON ON VERNONT POLITICS BY PAUL HERTZ

## Statehouse Rules

**A**s soon as they arrived in Montpelier Tuesday, Vermont legislators sought to open the floodgates to more money in politics.

A mere two hours after House Speaker **SHAY MURKIN** and Senate President Pro Tem **JOHN CAMPBELL** gavelled in the 2014 legislative session, House and Senate negotiators signed off on a long-sought agreement to reform the state's campaign finance system.

Only problem is the proposed "reform" would actually increase the amount of money many political action could raise. It's so watered down from earlier proposals that the Vermont Public Interest Research Group, which has spent years fighting for such a bill, has already vowed to oppose it.

"It just cannot be described as necessary or campaign finance reform any longer," said VPIRG Executive Director **PAUL HARRIS**. "It increases the amount of money in politics in this state, and it doesn't do enough to increase transparency that voters have a right to."

The legislation would double from \$2,000 to \$4,000 the amount that statewide candidates and political action committees could raise from individuals, corporations and PACs. And it would cap totals to \$10,000 the amount political parties could raise from each of those entities.

Constituents will be permitted to transfer an unlimited amount of money to candidates, donors could easily circumvent those higher limits by legally laundering money through a party.

So why are contribution limits going up — not down?

The cost of campaigning continues to rise, argues Rep. **CHRIS EHRMAN** (D-East Junction), one of ten negotiators who forged the compromise between competing House and Senate versions that passed last spring. Their plan could pass the full House and Senate later this week.

"We did actually have some input from statewide candidates, but I think that they could probably use more money," Ehrman said, declining to name names.

No doubt they did.

Of the 56 individuals and corporations donating to Gov. **PETER SHUMLIN**'s reelection campaign in the first six months of last year, 39 of them hit the existing \$2,000 limit. And that was just a quarter of the way through the two-year election cycle.

Not all contribution caps would increase the amount of money going to the House: statewide candidates would be limited to donations of just \$5,000, while senators would be limited to \$10,000. Both currently cap at \$2,000.

The bill also requires more frequent fundraising reports, though candidates still

only have to file once in non-election years. And a provision inserted in Burlington by **SENATOR ANTHONY**, who donated more than \$100,000 to a conservative super PAC in 2012, would require such groups to identify big-dollar donors in advertisements.

But legislators scrapped other reforms. Like a proposal for non-corporate donations. And at the insistence of House negotiators, it declined to require donors to disclose their occupations and employers.

## SO WHY ARE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION LIMITS GOING UP — NOT DOWN?

"We come from small, rural communities. I mean, you're going to be able to identify who that person is," explained Rep. **URIAH MARSH** (D-Winford), who served on the conference committee. "What does it accomplish?"

"What's the real game there?" Ehrman added. "We just thought it wasn't necessary."

Why would the public want to know which companies and industries are ponying up to political campaigns?

Um, one thinks it's a few reasons.

### Lisman's List

Lisman has a problem: keeping our elected officials accountable.

These words, lifted off *Vermonter* Campaign for Vermont founder **MARK LISMAN**, played for reporters last Thursday in a Montpelier television studio. There he unveiled a slate of reforms he said would clean up state government.

Among his recommendations? A new code of ethics governing state officials and a state-specific ethics commission to enforce state compliance. New conflict-of-interest rules for legislators and personal financial disclosures for statewide officials. Also a "revolving door" ban that would keep ex-officials from lobbying their former colleagues for up to two years.

"Right off, in almost all cases, comes problems," said Lisman, a former Wall Street executive.

But which problems, precisely, was the House resident hoping to address? Oddly, he wouldn't quite say. "Throughout this hour-long presentation, Lisman declined to cite a single conflict or ethics breach."

But the four-minute video he played included some serious dog whistles. It was a virtual highlight reel of last summer's news coverage of a contentious land deal

between Gov. Peter Shumlin and an East Montpelier neighbor.

Asked if he was implying that Shumlin acted unethically when he bought his neighbor's house on the cheap, the grand Lisman, who has spent more than a million dollars building his own image with television and radio advertisements, demurred.

"The answer is I don't know," he said succinctly. "I don't know that anything was ever proven."

That said, Lisman was briefly noted that if his proposed ethics commission had been in place, the guy might have checked in before and after, and, "What do you think?"

Told about Lisman's proposal, state politicians quickly lined up for *Many* — Democrats and Republicans alike — new terms vastly easier as a threat to be relegated to a pretty far-fetched.

I don't know why this is needed," said Sen. **JEFF MARSH** (D-Grafton), a behind-the-scenes power broker. "I think we're trying to address a problem that's not there."

But **MARK HARRIS**, managing editor for the Center for Public Integrity, seen it differently. In his 2012, the nonpartisan investigation requesting legislation gave Vermont a D+ on its "Campaign Risk Report Card." The state lagged because it's one of only three in the country with no ethics commission or personal financial disclosure rules.

"Tosses from place to place," Vermonter and Lisman like to say the idea that "We haven't had any big corruption scandals," Wilkins said. "But those who believe in strong disclosure standards say, 'Of course not! You have none of the systems that would force out malfeasance or corruption.'

And despite Lisman's reluctance to cite specifics, there's never any shortage of eye-popping misdeeds in and out of Vermont state government.

Take, for instance, **RANDI MARSHALL**, Shumlin's former former ethics czar who departed from the administration last year to take a job with the Vermont Telephone Company — just weeks after voting to increase a state grant to VTE.

Or former House Majority Leader **ARYN MURKIN**, who accepted her seat in June 2012 to take a job with Green Mountain Power, only to be named deputy secretary of commerce six months later.

Or **MARK HARRIS**, who signed up to lobby for the Vermont Fiber Developers Association immediately after concluding his 12-year run in the Senate.

Of course, some state legislators have no need for the revolving door, since they already work for nonprofits or advocacy groups that heavily lobby the state.

Rep. **PAUL HERTZ** (D-Berlin), whose day job is Vermont director of public

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# Violent Odyssey: Kidnapping Victim Speaks for First Time About Terrifying Road Trip

BY MARK DURIS

**S**teve Radisson lay in the back of a St. Johnsbury shopping center, blood gushing from bullet holes in his stomach and leg. Radisson had made a daring attempt to grab the .45mm pistol away from the man who was shooting it at him, but succeeded only in breaking the black mask off the man's face.

And now the shooter — whom Radisson recognized as Oscar Rodriguez, his girlfriend's estranged husband — was ordering Radisson into the trunk of his beat-up Chevy Aviva.

With his wounds, Radisson didn't think he could stand up, let alone hold himself onto a trunk. He later recalled, "Then, he thought, hopping onto the trunk of a car never went well for people in the movies. And even if he were willing, there was no room like trunk was full of papers and an old air conditioner he had been meaning to get rid of."

"Are you holding me?" Radisson asked Rodriguez.

Rodriguez squared the trigger over more, squeezing a third round into Rodriguez's stomach.

"I told you I wasn't holding," the shooter said.

Rodriguez's memories of the next five hours of that night in March 2012 are fragmented, flashes of terror unfolding between lapses in consciousness. But the outlines of the case authorities built against Rodriguez are as indelible as his hand.

Rodriguez, being forced to crawl into the front passenger seat, Rodriguez, numbness and methodical at the same time, positioning himself with a gun in the backseat. Rodriguez's comrade, an ex-con biker named Tim Evans, being forced to drive the car for 71 miles across northern Vermont and New Hampshire as Rodriguez negotiated with police on the phone and threatened more "Mendoza."

Rodriguez and others involved discussed the ordeal for the first time in interviews with Seven Days, shortly after a December hearing in which Rodriguez, a 57-year-old St. Johnsbury resident, was sentenced in US District Court to 22 years in prison.

Rodriguez, who has largely recovered — at least physically — from his wounds, said he expected those hours to be his last.

"You don't bring a gun unless you are planning on using it," he said in an interview in the Wells River apartment he shares with Rhonda Rodriguez and the three children she had with Oscar Rodriguez. "I figured this was the end."



Steve Radisson holding a picture of his late son, Steven.

## Marriage Gone Bad

Rodriguez grew up across the Connecticut River from his current home, in tiny Franklin, NH, and graduated from Woodstock High School in 1987.

He stayed in the area his whole life and by 2007 had settled into a well-revered managerial job at Ocean State Job Lot in St. Johnsbury.

During that summer he grew close with a new co-worker, Rhonda Rodriguez, whom now Rodriguez says had strained relationships with her longtime husband, Oscar.

The couple had had their first child only months after marrying in their early twenties. Theirs were tough years: the state, Oscar Rodriguez was diagnosed in a few years later with diabetes, which soon led to kidney failure. By the time he was 30, Rodriguez needed kidney dialysis three times a week to stay alive, and doctors told him he would be unlikely to see his 50th birthday.

He struggled to find work, and while he worked a string of low-paying jobs to make ends meet, they stayed for months at a time with Rodriguez's mother, who lives in a trailer park in St. Johnsbury.

Rhonda Rodriguez said the relationship turned violent, and once awards drove the couple out a restraining order in 2010, alleging that Oscar had struck both her and their sons.

In the fall of 2011, Rhonda sold the home she and her sons had been living in on Ocean State Job Lot's outside Boston and fled for divorce.

But Rhonda Rodriguez said, the couple left the state with her sons before the divorce was finalized. Further complicating her plan, she said, she began to fall ill for Rodriguez. They started spending time publicly together outside work and Oscar Rodriguez, according to state and federal

court documents, began to focus his anger on Rodriguez.

In February 2012, Rodriguez applied for a restraining order against Rodriguez, asserting his of trying to break into his truck, following him while he drove to work, slashing his tires multiple times and leaving threatening messages.

A judge scheduled a court hearing for March 6, 2012, to decide whether to issue an order against Rodriguez. The hearing would never occur.

## A Bunch of Bullet Holes\*

The night before the scheduled hearing was bitterly cold, and changing temperatures had scared many off but a few customers at Green State Job Lot. Rodriguez and his son, Steven, drove down the road together and walked outside into the main parking lot a few minutes after 9 p.m.

Rodriguez said that the heard footprints behind them as they walked through the empty parking lot. They turned around and saw a man dressed in a black ski mask, black jacket and boots, and white latex gloves. He had a gun in his hand.

"Stop walking," he said.

Rodriguez thought she recognized the voice. One of her daughters was friends with Rodriguez's oldest son, and she was aware of the martial style, she explained while on the witness stand during Rodriguez's sentencing hearing.

">Name Rodriguez's car," they stopped.

"You know what this is about," and the masked man for a brief second, a strand of hair escaped. Then Rodriguez lowered the gun slightly and Rodriguez thought he saw his brother and nodded forward.

"Want the gun?" Rodriguez said in an interior voice. "That was the only thing said in an interior voice."

Rodriguez stood a sturdy 6 feet 2 inches tall, but Rodriguez is just as big. Rodriguez couldn't squeeze the gun away during the struggle, the driver's side window was broken, Rodriguez's mask flew off and he saw two shots aimed at Rodriguez.

Rodriguez fell to the pavement. After he was shot a third time, Rodriguez ordered him into the car and his victim manager to pull himself into the front passenger seat. Rodriguez even remembered to put his seat belt on.

Rodriguez ordered Evans into the driver's seat, where shards of glass from the broken window dug into her legs. Rodriguez, his gun never having left his hand, sat in the back.

Evans ordered Evans to drive 16 miles to the Frank D. Cormier Correctional Center in

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

NH), across the river from Lancaster, VT. Once there, Rodriguez told Bodenham to call Belton Rodriguez.

Back at home in Wells River, Belton Rodriguez became concerned when the car Bodenham's number on her older ID. Bodenham used a Tropicana, and making calls was expensive. He generally communicated with her through text messages.

When she pulled up, she heard her estranged husband say, "Get up, Steve." Then the low voice went silent. It was already before 30 p.m.

Belton Rodriguez called the police, who sped to Towne State Job Lot and found blood in the parking lot. She didn't hear from her husband or Bodenham for another half hour. Evans, following orders, had set out north for Litchfield, NH, 17 miles away. Meanwhile, Belton Rodriguez drove to the Vermont State Police barracks in St. Johnsbury and waited for another call.

At first she believed her husband had only beaten up Bodenham. But during their next phone conversation, while she was at the barracks, Rodriguez told her it was much worse.

"He already has a bunch of bullet holes in his body," he told Belton.

For nearly five hours,

Evans drove, keeping along dirt roads and main highways in Coös County in Vermont and Grafton County in New Hampshire. Along the way, they passed three hospitals and at least one police station.

As they approached St. Johnsbury's Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital, Rodriguez assessed he was going to drop off Bodenham. But when they reached a sleek turn to the hospital, Rodriguez made Evans turn right, toward Interstate 91. Bodenham died.

Cellphone service was spotty, but Towne Rodriguez managed to make at least 30 calls to Belton Rodriguez during the dying car's last.

His demand was always the same — he wanted to see her.

"I was like, 'You aren't getting me, because my kids need me,'" Belton Rodriguez recalled thinking to herself.

Around 12:45 a.m., Belton decided she couldn't handle another call, and handed her phone to Vermont State Police Trooper David Goward, who knew her husband from growing up at St. Johnsbury.

"We've got to get people to safety," the trooper said to Towne Rodriguez.

Rodriguez told Goward that both

Evans and Rodriguez were unharmed. "I need to speak to Felicia," he said.

"I don't think that's an option ... the way things are going right now, I don't think that's possible," Goward said, according to a recording of their conversation.

"The only thing that can happen is if you guys will have to put me down," Rodriguez replied.

Later, Rodriguez expressed confusion at the violent turns of events he had caused.

"I never thought something like that would happen," Rodriguez told Goward. "I didn't think it would get this far."

## Giving Chase

Neither did Bodenham, who said in the interview that he remembered being confused when his car did not run out of gas that night. Bodenham had caused one accident that day on routes, and had no hope that he would be saved by an empty gas tank. But he was unseasonably far ahead of schedule during use of those intervals.

Rodriguez made Evans pull over at a gas station in Litchfield, NH, and put \$50 of fuel in the tank.

As the car reached Litchfield, NH, Bodenham regained consciousness, but, he said, he began to lose hope. Rodriguez had again ordered Evans to pull over, along the Ammonoosuc River.

Across that river, Bodenham could see the Litchfield police station. He would either get help, or he would die, and both outcomes were beyond his control.

"That's when I stopped driving," Rodriguez said.

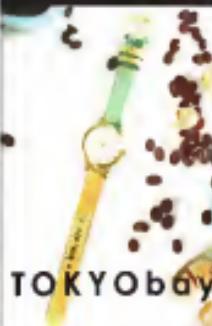
But things were changing for the better. Goward and other troopers were able to keep Rodriguez on the phone.

As the group neared Wolfeboro, some of the armfuls of poker chips that had descended on the region finally caught up to Bodenham's Chevy Prism and began to give chase.

At the intersection of Route 302 and 1-91 in Wells River, police deployed spikes that deflated the car's tires. At Rodriguez's insistence, Evans pulled the damaged vehicle into the nearby P & H Truck Stop in Wells River, where police waited.

With Rodriguez's permission, Evans dashed out of the car. Bodenham crawled to safety. At about 3 a.m., after a few minutes of negotiation, Rodriguez left his gas in the car, opened the door and surrendered.

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# The Old College Try: In Vermont, 'Affinity Marketing' Targets Alumni

BY CHARLES EICHACKER

**I**magine that you get a letter from an insurance company. Because you or your child attended a certain college, the letter informs, you could save up to 10 percent on a car insurance plan. A disclaimer mentions that your school's alumni association receives a fee for allowing the company to market those savings. It also directs you to a website where you can unsubscribe from future communications from

Do you take advantage of the savings? Check the letter? Do you website to opt out of future solicitations? Or do you contact the alumni association directly, wondering that your personal information has been sold for profit?

In a process known as "affinity marketing," some companies pay fees to membership organizations — trade and donor groups, for example — for the right to market discounted services to people at their contact lists. In Vermont, the most visible affinity marketer is Liberty Mutual. The Boston-based provider of auto and homeowners has deals with 350 shared groups nationwide, including those at the University of Vermont and Vermont state colleges.

The very Liberty Mutual compensation these shared groups varies from school to school. At UVM, where alumni relations are handled through the UVM Foundation — a legally independent entity incorporated in 2001 to fundraise for the alma mater — Liberty Mutual pays the association based on how many shares it will sign up. At Johnson State College, the alumni association gets a cut for every share who enrolls.

The reason that the colleges do it is because it's win-win-win," says Lauren Pfeifer, director of development and related relations at Johnson State. "We get a small percentage of their renewal rates or sign-ups, she says. "The alumni get a discount, and if Liberty Mutual wasn't offering the alumni a discount, we would need to do it."

But some shared and private advocates don't view these partnerships so sympathetically — even if they are legal and lead to offers of cheaper services from a Fortune 500 company such as Liberty Mutual. Affinity marketing isn't new, explains

Susan Gross of the Consumer Federation of America, because there has never been a federal law to stop organizations from sharing contact information without their members' consent.

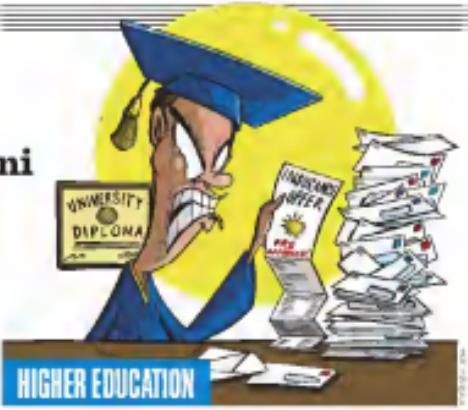
For the corporation, "it's obviously the share of using an existing channel where there are already people with whom the entity, the partner, has some sort of relationship," Gross says. "We certainly don't have an overarching privacy law like most other developed countries in the world do. It's a real problem. It's very frustrating, because you would think you could at least get something remedied that would give people a choice."

Out of the roughly 16,000 Johnson State shares, Pfeifer estimates that only those have complained to her about the college sharing their information. "Of the 16,000, they're like, 'Wait a minute, when, someone sold my name?'" Pfeifer says. "But we didn't sell, or there, anybody's name. That is really a Johnson State marketing. We're going to a mutual partnership that they can also easily opt out of any time."

Phillie doesn't believe the word "selling" describes what Johnson is doing. College officials upload a fresh contact list to a newer website for every approved marketing blast. Johnson's contract with Liberty Mutual prohibits the associate company from using those addresses, and no other person's information is shared until the next round of marketing.

"We don't collect any data," says Gross. "Glen Givens, senior consultant for public relations at Liberty Mutual, "It's really marketing to a list that's provided to us by the alumni association. We adhere to all the solicitation regulations. If someone's on a do-not-call list or something like that, that's not used."

Such insurance doesn't phase one UVM alumna who recently registered her own company with the UVM Foundation. That fall, Gary Ellingsborg, 34, who lives in New Jersey, received both a letter and an email from Liberty Mutual. In the November letter, which had come from the UVM Alumni Association, the company included a pin number for him to redeem those savings. In fine print, the note informed, "The UVM Alumni Association



## HIGHER EDUCATION

reserves financial support for allowing Liberty Mutual to offer this auto and home insurance program."

In a subsequent series of emails to the UVM Foundation, Ellingsborg decried the "affinity" approach. Discover recently started offering a branded credit card to UVM alumni and parents. At Northeast University, alumni earnings up for a United Services Automobile Association rewards credit card.

In response, Rich Randy, president and CEO of the UVM Foundation, explained that the alumni association's board of directors recently received Liberty Mutual's qualifications before deciding to partner with the group. He described the convenience of removing individuals from future email lists, and denied his organization "peddled" Ellingsborg's personal information, saying Ellingsborg's personal information was used to "allow contact information to market that program and only this program."

The federal CAN-SPAM Act of 2003 only requires that companies crafting advertisements allow recipients to opt out of future communications. Instead, Ellingsborg says, he'd like to see the UVM Alumni Association enforce an opt-out policy, where schools would have to consent to receive such communications. As the European Union, companies are required to take that approach.

It's not clear how many of Ellingsborg's fellow alumni share his concerns. The Consumer Protection Unit of the Vermont Attorney General's Office hasn't received any complaints about Liberty Mutual solicitations. And in a conversation Ellingsborg started on the UVM Alumni Relations page — now closed by a site administrator — only two individuals responded. One hadn't received any Liberty Mutual emails. The other expressed her appreciation for the savings.

Alan Ryan, associate VP of alumni relations and development services at the

UVM Foundation, says that 20 of the university's 185,000 graduates have contacted his office to opt out of partner emails.

What other companies are employing the "affinity" approach? Discover recently started offering a branded credit card to UVM alumni and parents. At Northeast University, alumni earnings up for a United Services Automobile Association rewards credit card.

Other alumni associations around Vermont have been more reluctant to enter into affinity marketing agreements. Middlebury College has never offered its grads any corporate benefits, according to Meg Sturtevant, associate VP for alumni relations and annual giving. She says writing the proposals would require significant time and effort, and the school wouldn't want to be seen as endorsing a particular company.

Angela Armento, director of alumni and parent relations at St. Michael's College, explains that the schools' alumni board hasn't chosen to offer corporate benefits due to concerns about privacy and bonding issues. But schools working in the insurance industry have approached the group, Armento says, and it's planning to give the matter some thought this year.

With or without an opt-in policy, St. Michael's and other schools remain free to do that now. That fact, says Gross, is a troubling sign of the times. Ever more personal information is flying across the internet every day, she says, that is worth a lot to companies.

"There is a lot of resistance to any sort of federal legislation on the part of companies, and that resistance is only getting tougher in the era of 'Big Data,'" Gross says. "The presumption is not that people in control of your information being shared. It's just not where we're at."

Charles: charles@sevenday.com



## Violent Odyssey

Rodriguez was admitted to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N.H., where doctors pumped 15 hours of blood into him before they could even begin operating. He stayed there for six months. His spleen was removed, his pancreas repaired and his leg broken.

The prosecution of Rodriguez dragged on for nearly two years, slowed by a transfer of the case from state to federal court and by complications that arose when Rodriguez suffered kidney failure in prison.

But in late 2011, a plea deal was struck. On a recent December afternoon, Rodriguez rose during his sentencing hearing and offered his first public statement on the ordeal.

"I take responsibility for everything, and I'm truly sorry," he said, before being led away by sheriff's deputies to serve a 22-year sentence for kidnapping and attempted murder (because of his kidney problems, doctors expect Rodriguez to die in prison long before that sentence expires).

His attorney, Michael Desautels, argued that Rodriguez intended to kill only himself that night, and that he was "self-centered."

Rodriguez told the judge that she now lives in constant fear that she rarely leaves home except to go to work. Her children call her constantly to make sure she is safely on route back from her shifts at the store.

"I don't do anything any more," Rodriguez said.

In the summer of 2012, Rodriguez went back to work and now parks in the same lot where he was kidnapped.

But he lives with new limitations. He walks with a cane, the result of a blood clot that developed in his leg after he was shot. He must take blood-thinning medicine (which makes him bruise) for the rest of his life. Walking for any length of time eats him from the bottom, but he's learned to get a cab home for the past two summers.

"Some days I feel ashamed," Rodriguez said.

He and Fabiana Rodriguez are raising her three children, who range in age from 9 to 16 and have not seen their father since his arrest. The Rodriguezes divorce is pending.

While the criminal case has wrapped up, the incident is never far from Rodriguez's mind. A few months after the incident, he did return to him a box of belongings that had been left in his car after police finished cleaning up. The night he was shot, Rodriguez was wearing his Ocean State Job Lot name tag, which hung on a keeper just above his belly.

When he pulled the name tag out of the box, he saw the plastic material with a streak of red and a small round opening. It almost looked like the mark of a shotgunch.

Contact Mark Davis at mark@sevendepot.com

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# Public to Private: Could 'Conversion' Become a Trend in Vermont Schools?

BY KATHRYN FLAGG | PHOTOS BY PETER CRABTREE

**W**hen North Bennington residents voted to shutter their public school, it wasn't because of rising teacher pay or declining test scores. Nor was it. They were worried the state would close or consolidate the small, kindergarten-through-ninth-grade school in their town of 1,500. So they proposed that and made it private. The school district now pays tuition for North Bennington children to attend the new Village School.

"The reason we walked down this path was we wanted to sustain the school as it was, at the heart of the community, providing the service that it does to our district's children," says Ray McLean, a 10-year veteran of the Prudential Committee, which governs the public school district. "We wanted to maintain local control, and we wanted to retain the climate and character and quality of the school."

For their part, state officials say North Bennington had no reason to believe its elementary school days were numbered—and the town's sense of action could have unwanted consequences.

"Basically what they did is turn over complete control of the school to a body that is not answerable to the public," says outgoing Vermont Secretary of Education Armando Vilaseca.

They made a local decision to give up local control, and that's ironic in a way," suggests Vilaseca's successor, Robert Holobus.

It is unusual that control from the local supervisory union and state education officials—North Bennington kindled a statewide debate about the role of independent schools in Vermont. Vilaseca, who leaves his post that month, condemned North Bennington's move in a report released in December and strongly suggested state lawmakers forbid any future privatization of public schools.

Further, Vilaseca is recommending some major changes to the way Vermont treats independent schools—many of which receive public dollars to educate students who are "outsiders" in their communities without public schools of their own. Vilaseca urges that independent schools receiving public funds should provide free and reduced lunch programs. He wants private schools with publicly funded students to meet the same state guidelines as public schools, and is urging the legislature to repeal a provision in state law that allows communities to approve higher tuition rates for independent schools.

Advocates of independent schools are fighting back. "They say Vilaseca bypassed the summer study committee that was supposed to report back to the legislature on the state's local implications of public schools closing and going independent," says Bengtson, the chair of Bellmont Charter Academy's board of trustees, and Vilaseca was "contemporaneous of the process, of the legislative directive, of our race.... That report was essentially written before we ever thought about meeting."

Iran Boenigk, the head of Manchester's Maple Street School, was also on Vilaseca's summer study committee. "It felt like the process was really inclusive," she says, naming the resulting report full of the kind of charge to help legislators local school districts about independent schools.

Vilaseca states directly in the controversial December 3 report that its recommendations are his own and not reflective of the committee—that was always his intention, he claims. In response, the members of the committee representing independent schools in their local districts are in port, arguing against "unnecessary legislation" and arguing that it is "wise for Vermont to not only keep school closer when it is, but to look to expand it to districts, positioning our state to be a national leader in education."

"Of course," independent schools are concerned when officials such as Vilaseca put the spotlight on their practices, said Bill Moore, executive director of the Vermont Independent Schools Association. "Everybody's worried about the cost of education. Money is important right now."

An estimated \$164 million in public funds went to independent寄宿制 institutions last year. When North Bennington opted to close its school, it became one of 90 towns in Vermont that in four decades have sold their children to school—and financed their choices with taxpayer dollars. Roughly 11 percent of Vermont's K-12 students attend independent schools, that number, provided by VISA, includes children whose parents elect to pay tuition as well as those whose tuition bills are covered by towns that don't operate schools.

Most funded students attending independent schools are in middle or high school, few towns "ration out" elementary school funds. Around 2,000 students attend Vermont's four town academies, which are private institutions that act like the defunct public schools in their communities. Student debt back then was 100 years, and more than many students who had left the towns they serve since officials are quick



North Bennington's elementary school

to say that their concerns about the North Bennington scenario don't extend to these academic institutions.

Moore doubts that many other districts would go to the lengths that North Bennington has to change its school structure. But he says that doesn't mean all Vermont school districts are happy with the status quo.

"I do think some small districts are looking at this," says Moore. "They feel left out. They feel unappreciated. [They have] legitimate concerns and they're not getting much respect."

## Same School, Different Structure

North Bennington's private school doesn't look much different than it did that time last year. The public school officially closed on the last Friday in June 2013, and reopened as an independent school following Monday morning. Students returned to the building on September 4.

Students still arrive in for classes as the same sturdy brick schoolhouse that dates back to the late 19th century. Even classroom instruction remains largely unchanged. Students here still take standardized tests, and teachers adhere to the new "Common Core" standards in place at public schools throughout Vermont.

Though most of the teachers chose to stay through the transition, they did so only after being technically laid off by the local school district and rehired by the independent school, their salaries and benefits stayed the same, but they no longer have union, overtime or representation.

The change can be seen in the office of Thomas Martin—a former principal, now headteacher, who spent 30 years in public education. Martin is now running what amounts to a small business. His overhead payroll, internet services, building and maintenance costs—basically anything and everything previously handled by the supervisory union.

His office is part workplace, part Willy Wonka's confectionery. There's a talking paper-cut machine in one corner, and white pendents line the walls. Kites and brightly colored whirligigs dangle from the ceiling. On a snowy winter morning, the radiator sends up a wintery crackle, bangs and rumbles.

Since coming on as North Bennington's principal in 2006, Martin has watched the town grapple with decisions about the school's future. He ticks off a laundry list of committees and special study groups that looked into the bigger picture of school sustainability, then more specifically into the idea of going independent. He calls the

# I HAVE MORE FLEXIBILITY AND FREEDOM TO DO WHAT'S BEST FOR OUR SCHOOL.

THOMAS MARTIN



THOMAS MARTIN

its schools — happened in a matter of mere months at the Village School.

"I have more flexibility and freedom to do what's best for our school," says Martin.

Outside, kids are spilling gleefully during their mid-morning recess. When Martin walks outside to speak with a colleague, a young boy chokes him, "Mr. Martin! Put on a coat!" The snow is coming down harder. A few of the older children have snowmen in their wake which they are then given a small slope on the playground.

Third-grade teacher Pit Gibbons, a 25-year veteran at the school, abhors her pink checkered, merrily-dampened charges back inside, where the students settle down for a period of silent reading.

North Bennington educated 170 students a year when Gibbons started, as a teacher here. At one point during her tenure, there were as many as 360 kids in the building, and she's seen numbers dip as low as the. That's not to say, by Vermont standards, but community members still wince about the enrollment trends.

"In terms of decreasing, it's logical to assume that a small-village school will have to struggle to save its identity," she says. "We have a very special village school that we wanted to retain."

North Bennington was the second community in Vermont to close its public elementary school and reopen a privately run one in its place. The first, Wardsell, closed its public school in 1998 and now collects about per pupil costs — they were the highest in the state of Vermont at the time — and the quality of education.

Five years later, North Bennington's decision was based on very different reasons. Formerly known as the North Bennington-Graded School, the elementary school and its teachers are before the community. Advocates for going independent began by liberating the school from the restrictions of public education, would help keep it afloat in years to come. There'll be the possibility of fundraising, for instance, and of attracting students from

neighboring communities whose parents might be willing to pay tuition.

"This model is not a panacea," says Martin. "It doesn't make the problems and challenges we were facing go away. It does give us some control."

There's still a public school district in North Bennington, but now it pays tuition — \$12,000 per pupil the year — to the Village School instead of operating its own K-12 learning facility. The Village School, in turn, leases its brick schoolhouse from the district for \$76,000 a year. After they graduate from sixth grade, Village School students go on to attend the public Mount Anthony Union Middle and high schools.

## Lossing Local Control?

This North Bennington's Village School survived its first semester hasn't assigned for concerns of state officials and lawmakers.

In his report to lawmakers, Vilimova argues that a community's decision to take a public school private poses some potential problems for the town. Vilimova is concerned that the switch to independent schools will limit the educational opportunities for low-income students. The school provides special education services for at-risk children, but there's no guarantee, Vilimova says, that it will continue to do so in the future.

Malone says that's just not true. He says North Bennington's independent school has pledged to provide special education services for any child that it can reasonably accommodate in the building. If a student were so severely disabled that he or she couldn't be accommodated, the public school district would fund a placement in a specialized program — but that's always been the case, and happens in towns that operate public schools, too.

"There really isn't a public school in the state that can take every student with every disability," says Malone.

Malone, officials say there's also a potential financial cost when it comes to going independent. While the Agency of Education says it's too early to know the financial impact on taxpayers, the switch sees the town loses direct control of the independent school's budget. Districts that operate public schools can shift down, every year, into the line items of their school budget. North Bennington voters won't have that option.

Looking at the big picture, though, the way the town funds education won't change. North Bennington will still pay property taxes for education to Montpelier, and receive money back depending on the state's budget. voters approve North Bennington, like all towns in the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union, is considered a "nonvoting" district under the statewide system that funds education and is designed to spread the wealth between

rich and poor communities. That means the town gets back more for education than it contributes in property-tax dollars.

"It's clear that these people care deeply about their children," says Holcombe, but the tag says it's still concerning that "maybe this decision hasn't been fully thought out." The town is still liable and responsible for educating all of its children, she says, but North Bennington has "grown up control without responsibility."

In response, independent school advocates say there is a different kind of accountability at their schools, if parents don't like the way a school is run, or aren't happy with the results of their child's education, they can leave. Already, Martin says, he's fielding phone calls from parents of next year's kindergartners. The question isn't when those children will enroll at his school, but if, in theory, that competitive pressure should keep the school on its toes.

"The most powerful voice the community has is a choice," says Martin.

But public schools serve more than just children and families, argues Rep. Johnnae Donovan (D-Bennington), the chair of the House Education Committee. Donovan introduced legislation last year that would have prevented further school conversion like the one in North Bennington. The bill didn't pass, but Donovan and other lawmakers are gearing up for another conversation about independent school in the 2014 legislative session.

"The schools in Vermont do not exist for parents. They exist for the community and for the good of all of us," says Donovan. "They exist because of a common need to develop good citizens, good employees, good family people."

Donovan says her critique of what happened in North Bennington isn't an attack on independent schools. But she supports the idea of further investigating Vermont's unusual school-choice system, particularly in cases where independent schools are receiving significant taxpayer money. In those cases, she believes, like Vilimova, that schools should "have to play within the same sort of rules that other institutions do to take public dollars" — think school lunch, services for children with disabilities and other programs funded by public schools.

Malone isn't worried about North Bennington's independence. He says that any community that goes to the lengths his dad has gone to be "committed to doing the right things for kids."

"I think that if local control is to mean anything, you have to trust the communities to make their decisions for themselves about how they want to provide education for their children," says Malone. "You have to enable them, not stand in the way of them."

Contact: [karley@sevendaysvt.com](mailto:karley@sevendaysvt.com)



final proposal "one of the most carefully vetted" he's ever seen. And though he had reservations initially about the plan — he calls it "an 'urban stereotype'" that got attached to private schools, such as kids in blazers — he came to support the idea.

After North Bennington voters approved it — "overwhelmingly," Martin says now, by roughly 80 percent — state education officials took notice. First came a phone call from Vilimova, voicing concerns about the vote, followed by decomposing meetings in Montpelier. Then the Vermont Board of Education delayed the approval of the new independent school pending back the timeline for North Bennington's shift and triggering two more reviews in the process.

Martin says he knew the town would get no resistance from officials — "bureaucracies don't like outriders," he says — but he was taken aback by the year-and-a-half-long struggle.

The good news? He says all is proceeding relatively smoothly at the new independent school. After years of talk about offering language instruction, the school is partnering with students from Bennington College to provide it. What wasn't possible before — because of employment contracts, and requirements that the superintendents take after similar programming at all of

# lifelines

## OBITUARIES, VOWS CELEBRATIONS

### OBITUARIES



COURTESY OF THE FAMILY

#### Andy Williams

BURLINGTON 1935-2013

Andy was raised by his mean, ill-tempered father who moved the family to the U.S. from the Philippines at age 16. Andy was born on August 30, 1935 in Paranaque, N.J., and moved to Burlington, Vt., at age 12. Andy had the privilege of meeting Filomena, his mother, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Everything that Andy had was a result of this person and he had work his genuine compassion, ascent, and success. Andy was a man of few words, but always had a serious smile, and he would do whatever he could to support his beginning acting career. Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

When Andy moved to St. Louis, he made fast friends, who became brothers, mentors, and confidants. Andy's first love was his guitar, and he began to play it at an early age. Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

After Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died, he began to play the guitar, and he had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

After Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died, he began to play the guitar, and he had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Beginning with his first gig when Diane Grayson first met him, he was a natural. Andy had the natural talent of his own instrument, and anyone who has to listen to him knows what incredible skill and talent that requires.

Andy's first professional gig was when his performances started attracting more and more people to his shows—whether it's a birthday, anniversary, or a wedding. Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Andy also had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died. Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died. Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

peaks with some kind of gift—a melody he has just made a friend or an acquaintance or something.

Andy's best gigs and a half hours were spent with his partner and soulmate, Diane Grayson. Diane. They knew from their small Burlington apartment that a creative person makes a good life by itself. They had immense pleasure in everything they did—singing, dancing, writing. Andy often referred to Diane as his "partner" and friend, and he was with her with pleasure, love and admiration.

John was on the way to his 10th year of the way that he had made his year—during Andy's final days for Acute Myeloid Leukemia, comprising 10 that were filled with love and during the complications resulting from his treatments. He has been a inspiration for Michael Morris, an engineer who is finding new medical cures for these kinds of diseases.

Andy also had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died. Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Filomena, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.



#### William "Bill" Goldstein

BUCKMAN

Author Bill Goldstein, 96, passed away peacefully on the morning of Tuesday December 23, 2013 surrounded by family. Bill was a man of many talents and passions, an avid athlete and outdoorsman, a lover of political discussions and good books, a well-respected surgeon, an experienced cyclist, a great patriarch to his children and grandchildren, and loving companion to his wife, Linda. Bill treasured his family and the experiences they shared.

Bill was born in 1917 in Brooklyn, N.Y., between the son of Gertrude and Benjamin Goldstein. He was captain of the Tilden High School basketball team and attended the University of Brooklyn. He married his high school sweet heart Linda (nee Linda Kornblith) in 1940. They had three children (two sons and one daughter) and enjoyed a happy life together. Bill died in New York City. Bill moved his young family to Englewood, New Jersey, and then to Mount Sinai Hospital in New Jersey, from 1980 to 1989, where he planned his education in cognitive techniques.

After leaving New Jersey, Linda became a teacher in 1950, whereas Bill introduced himself to a group of friends and approached every business with positivity. That is why Andy's name came up in his conversations with Bill, so he began to bring him when he had something interesting, often an operation or a surgery. Bill was a good listener and a good friend, and why they did it again and again. Linda died in 1998, and Bill died in New Jersey on December 23, 2013. This is only more than 1,200 people shared a room on a freezing winter night, for a cardiac arrest, and a day after his passing, visiting the hospital, with his family and friends.

There were friends, family, and friends, who came to pay their respects, and to say their final goodbyes. Bill had a special place in his heart for Diane, and he had the pleasure of meeting her when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

Andy had the pleasure of meeting his mother, Diane, when he was 10, and she was the last person he had contact with before he died.

#### Want to memorialize a loved one in Seven Days?

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**Leon K. Najarian**

HOPEDALE, MASS. 1939-2013



Leon K. "Mugie" Najarian of Hopedale died Wednesday, December 11, 2013, at home. He was born on May 13, 1939, in Burlington, Mass., the son of the late Nevert and Koller Najarian. He graduated from Burlington High School in 1958. He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Patricia; his children, Lorraine and Ronald Olson of Burlington; Alie and Greg Najarian; and Anthony, Peter, Daniel, Michael, and Christopher, Jason, Kristen, and Cassidy Najarian; his brother, Edward Najarian; and his wife, Joann, of Melrose; and several nieces and nephews.

In 1969 he started a first-service tech from the machine manufacturing industry when working for such companies as Raytheon, Counter and Case. He was a lifetime member of the Hopedale Padel and Billie Club, where he served as treasurer, and the Minuteman Padel and Gun Club of Melrose, Mass.

In his retirement he enjoyed spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren, traveling, and most especially riding his Harley in such places as Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire, and even country to South Dakota.

He will be missed. A private interment of interment at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to a charity of your choice. [www.funeralhome.com](http://www.funeralhome.com)

**BIRTHS****Kai Ashton Orton**

On December 5, 2013, at Fletcher Allen Health Care, Burlington, Paul and Joni Orton welcomed a baby boy, Kai Ashton Orton.

**Lucas Andrej Tomasi**

On December 12, 2013, at Fletcher Allen Health Care, Ujaja Mukundan and David Tomasi welcomed a baby boy, Lucas Andrej Tomasi.

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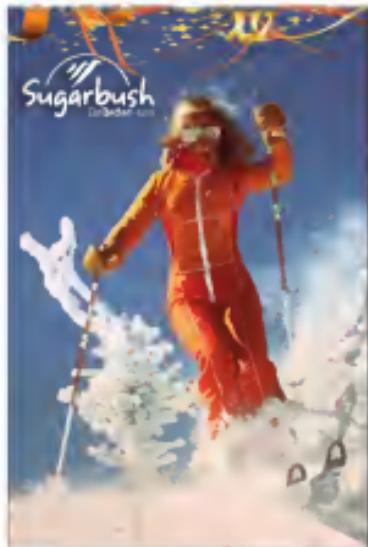
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# Mt. Ellen's 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration

Jan 9-12, 2014

Thursday, Jan 9<sup>th</sup>

3:00 AM - 6:00 PM

## 1963-PRICED LIFT TICKETS (\$6.50)

For skiers/snowboarders (6 and under free) Mt. Ellen only.

2:00 - 4:00 PM

## MAW RIVER VALLEY CITIZEN'S CHALLENGE

including the Valley Restaurant Cup

3:00 - 6:00 PM

Live après-ski music by **THE GULCH**  
in the Golden Thistle (Green Mountain Lounge, free)

Friday, Jan 10<sup>th</sup>

3:00 - 6:00 PM

## SKI AND RIDE with THE POINT

Apres-ski celebration (Green Mountain Lounge, free)

8:00 PM

Charlie Brown Movie Premier,  
**"THE 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF GLEN ELLEN"**  
(Gletscher House, free)

Friday, Jan 11<sup>th</sup>

2:00 PM

## SUGARBUSH CELEBRITY SKI RACE

2:00 PM

## SELAENDERSPUNG CHAMPIONSHIP

Mt. Ellen base area

## COWBELL CHAMPAGNE PARTY

(Green Mountain Lounge)

7:00 PM

## MT. ELLEN TORCHLIGHT PARADE AND FIREWORKS

7:00 PM - MIDNIGHT

## FASCHING COSTUME BALL

with live music by **CRIPPO PUNK BAND**  
(Green Mountain Lounge, \$10)

Saturday, Jan 12<sup>th</sup>

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

## ELLIOTT SUNDAY BRUNCH BUFFET

(Green Mountain Lounge, \$15/adult, \$7.50/child)

For details and to purchase tickets call 800.83.SUGAR or go to [sugarbush.com/glenellen](http://sugarbush.com/glenellen).



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## The Endangered Alphabets Project Finds Partners Around the World

BY ETHAN DE SEFFE | PHOTOS BY MATTHEW THIESSEN

These are our words, shaped  
By our hands, our tools,  
Our history. Lose them  
And we lose ourselves.

**T**his verse adorns the walls of three schools housed in the region of southeastern Bangladesh known as the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Each was written by a Vermont author, translated into the indigenous languages Mro, Marma and Chakma and hand carved into mahogany plaques. About 8,000 miles separate Vermont and Bangladesh, but no extraordinary project is bridging that distance in a most unusual way.

**ENDANGERED ALPHABETS** is an ambitious linguistic-art project created by Burlington's Tom Brookes, a writer, artist and instructor of professional writing at Champlain College. Physically, it consists of well-polished wooden plaques, into each of which Brookes has carved a text in one of the world's many dying languages—that is, those spoken or written by a small and dwindling number of people.

In recent months, Brookes, 64, has struck up two unusual partnerships that are bringing his work to far-flung locales and expanding Endangered Alphabets' purview. He's astonished at how the project has grown and transformed since its inception in 2003. "It's a constant series of surprises," Brookes says.

Few people speak Mro, Marma or Chakma anymore, even in Bangladesh. Political and cultural forces have confined these languages to small geographical areas, and to members of specific ethnic groups. Mro, for instance, has fewer than 20,000 speakers. Bengali has one official language, Bengali, in which all business and education are conducted.

To prevent centuries, colonization and the sprawl of a global economy were the principal forces behind the extinction of indigenous languages. Now, the internet plays a leading role in linguistic homogenization. English and Mandarin are the giants there. About half of all websites use one of those two languages.

The Endangered Languages Project at UNESCO—the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization—estimates that, without intervention, nearly half of the 6,000 languages spoken around the globe today



Brookes has carved 100 original works.

### LANGUAGE

will disappear by the end of the century.

With the loss of indigenous languages comes the likely disappearance of the scripts in which they are written. At present, just five alphabets—Latin (the one used to make English-language characters), Arabic, Cyrillic, Chinese and Japanese—are used in the great majority of printed texts, but it was the graceful curlicues of the Mayanian alphabet that first inspired Brookes' project.

He's become a passionate advocate for protecting disappearing languages and scripts, but in the beginning, Brookes just wanted to try his hand at woodcarving.

As he explains in his 2010 book *Endangered Alphabets*, the project began when some attractive pieces of carved handles at Burlington's *CHAMPLAIN HANDBOOKS* caught his eye. With those planks, Brookes carved signs for family members. Then he thought to challenge himself by carving words in other languages, and noted that he enjoyed the intense focus the project required. "Carving was extremely minute and finely and demanding," he says.

That didn't stop him from carving 14 planks for his first exhibition in 2003. Brookes soon branched out into threat-end languages such as Noot (from Vietnam) and Baga (from Indonesia),

and such as carved translations of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"I've never been a visual artist," says Brookes. "I didn't really think of it at the time in the way people think of art. I thought of it as preserving language using nice wood."

Soon, he found ways to accentuate the curves of his chosen scripts with the natural whorls in the wood. To differentiate a human-made pattern from "shape, older patterns that we recognize but can't understand—there's the human condition in a nutshell," Brookes says. "That was not something I'd understood until I'd done it."

As his passion for the project grew, Brookes took to the internet, creating both a blog and a Kickstarter campaign. (He also maintains a website with a gift shop offering such such as T-shirts, mugs and even decorative featuring endangered alphabets.) The blog caught the attention of Meuang Nyua, a Bangladeshi natural and doctoral student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Nyua is also executive director of a foundation called Our Golden Hour. Founded in 2011, the charitable organization is dedicated to educating children in the Chittagong Hill Tracts

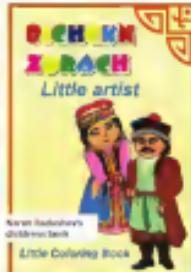
and to preserving that region's endangered cultural legacy.

In a recent phone conversation with *ST*, Nyua from Chittagong, Bangladesh, says, "I was really happy and excited to see that someone from Vermont—halfway around the world from the Chittagong Hill Tracts—was carving alphabets that most of the local population cannot read or write anymore."

He contacted Brookes, and before long the two were collaborating not only on placing the plaques in schools but on a unique series of books.

Nyua's ongoing project asks Bangladeshi students to tell their parents or grandparents tell their stories from their own youth. After writing down the stories in their indigenous language, the students read them aloud to classmates. Scans of the pages and video recordings of the readings are uploaded to DropBox, from which Nyua retrieves and transcribes them. These stories then become the very material that students will study to learn about their own language and culture.

Brookes joined the project in his role as the founder, editor and publisher of the *CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE PUBLISHING SERVICE*, a program that gives students practical experience in print and



electronic publishing. He recruited a team of students to design a series of educational books in several languages of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

When the books are complete, Brooks will use the \$10,000 grant via Kickstarter to print them and ship them to rural schools in Bangladesh. That'll be the first printed educational materials in their native languages that the students will ever see.

Among the students producing these books is Jessie Rotar, a graduate student in printmaking and book arts at Louisiana State University and a self-described "book geek." Alarmed by the project by a mutual friend, she reached out to Brooks via phone from New Jersey, an epicenter of Kalenyl culture in the U.S. "We have had to keep our culture and our language alive in so overwhelming here."

Rotar's concern for Indosiberia's glaucom led to a book featuring the ancient Kalenyl script. By coincidence, Bushnell has authored a children's book in the script, and aims to use the book to teach Kalenyl children about their history and culture. Brooks and Bushnell met last month to discuss collaborating on Kalenyl-language educational materials.

No one is more surprised than Brooks about the remarkable evolution of her bookendearing project, and he deeply appreciates what it has taught him. "It's amazing," he says, "how much we take our own language for granted." □

## INFO

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## VCFA / MFA in Writing for Children & Young Adults / Readings and Book Signing



### Marie-Louise Gay

Montreal-based writer and illustrator—writer-illustrator—has written books for children including the *Strega Nona* books and the *Tomie dePaola* books. Published in over 20 countries, Gay has won the Governor General's Award for Young People's Literature and the Hans Christian Andersen Award for her book *La Cosa*. She is the 2014-15 Writer in Residence at the New England Academy and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.

Reading: Tuesday, January 14, 2014, 7:30pm Chapel  
Book Signing: Tuesday, January 14, 2014, 8:30am Chapel



### Lucy Christopher

United Kingdom-based writer and illustrator—the award-winning author of *Three Bears*, *Little Sparrow*, and *The Telling House* (2014). Christopher's books have won the 2010 New Zealand Picture Book Award, the Australian Gold Ink Award, and the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year for Older Readers award. Both *Strega Nona* and *La Cosa* have been long-listed for the Carnegie Medal, with *La Cosa* short-listed for the Waterstones Prize and the Costa Book Award. Her most recent book, *The Telling Woods*, contains "dark young adult themes with the lightness of a fable in which Lucy Christopher is so beloved."

Reading: Monday, January 13, 2014, 7:30pm Chapel  
Book Signing: Tuesday, January 14, 2014, 8:30am Chapel

[vcfa.edu/wcya](http://vcfa.edu/wcya)



Vermont  
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## In Honor of Elvis: South Burlington 'King' Leads a Parallel Life

BY PAMELA POLSTON

**A** few weeks ago, when I realized the first issue of Seven Days in 2014 would be on January 8 — Elvis Presley's birthday — I determined to find and interview an Elvis impersonator I considered a credible Q&A, with someone who spends much of his time imitating the King of Rock and Roll. I figured out what it was like to rototile from Normal Dude into shadowy Stelly Leon, where he put his earthen, weathered ladies three parties at room level at him, if anyone under the age of 30 knew who the hell he was — that sort of thing.

But Elvis proved elusive. A friend actually saw one — with a vintage car, even — on the street in Boston, but failed to get his name. A Google search for "Elvis impersonator Vermont" took me ... far out in space. (Note to Google: New York is not in Vermont.) A colleague and I tramped up two leads, but both had outlived their usefulness.

Finally, I learned about **ELVIS HARMON**. And the very next day I did not anticipate

Now, it might be said that the 27-year-old South Burlington resident did not set out to be an "impersonator." He was a Beatles fan growing up. He doesn't look like Elvis. And, though he has a genuine sort-of-Southern accent, he doesn't sound like Elvis. He doesn't sing, earl his lips or waver his high, but Harmon can dance.

In a ballroom-dance class back in his native Michigan, he met his future wife, and it was her that Bigley Harmon became Elvis Presley. In a recent interview at the couple's compact South Burlington home — where there's a sprung dance floor in the basement — I find not only Our Soundtrack, an all-Elvis stereo channel cranking softly in the next room.

Harmon is married to **MARILYN GREEN**. Local know her as a former nun, retired Air Force colonel, retired South Burlington city councilor, and self-PBS activist. Green's name has been in the news a lot over the past couple of years (she was even recently nominated for Vermontier of the Year in the Burlington Free Press), but not once have the headlines noted she is a huge Elvis fan. Go figure.

## CULTURE

Marilyn Green and  
Elvis Harmon

**YOU CAN PUT AN ELVIS COSTUME ON A BROOM HANDLE, AND IT'LL GET A LOT OF ATTENTION.**

HISLEY HARMON

When Green met Harmon in dance class in 2008, she was living in Maryland and had just retired from her military career. Harmon was a few years shy of his own retirement from a feed-distribution company. "We were the only ones who didn't come with partners, so we were matched," says Green, 65. "That, we wouldn't have learned to dance, or gotten married."

Harmon acquired his alter ego at the after-We'll-almost. The after-organized Green had planned their wedding within an inch of its life, as Harmon decided to spring a surprise on his bride at the reception. Prepared to give a dance lesson to the guests — the entire event was dance-themed — Green had changed into a foxy red dress. Harmon entered himself to the room's room, and emerged as Elvis. It is on the pre-k

the band began to play Presley's Vegas-on-stage entrance tune ("I'm Sorry Standusta," aka the theme from *2001: A Space Odyssey*).

"I looked across the room and thought Bigley had hired an Elvis impersonator," Green recalls. "And that I married it was Bigley. It was adorable."

"It was bigger than the wedding," says Harmon. "As I was walking up with two American flags, people started hollering around me."

For the mystique of Elvis," Green explains.

So powerful is the suspension of disbelief when "Elvis" enters the room that "people were sticking money in my jacket," Harmon marvels.

Green had intended to teach the male wedding guests the routine, but she had few takers. Meanwhile, she says, "Bigley had 30 women lined up to dance with him."

On their honeymoon, Green and Harmon went to, yes, Graceland.

The couple eventually made their

way to Vermont, where Green had vowed to spend her retirement years. And Harmon did not leave his padparascha behind. Now working as a schoolbus driver, he says he'll sometimes don the white protest, black wig and aviators for Halloween. "The kids think I'm Michael Jackson or Fred Kneely," he says with a grin.

Harmon and Green also occasionally perform as dancers for a profit: fund-raising events — "We dress as Elvis, I am a Jerry-bopper," she says. Green recalls one costume party where the couple swapped roles — gender roles, that is — the went as Elvis, and Harmon went as Marilyn Monroe. When they enacted Marilyn's classic windy skirt scene, partygoers were treated in the right of Harmon's on-the-dot underpants.

Harmon has even attended an F-45 rally in costume, carrying a sign that announced "Elvis says no to the F-25."

One of Harmon's favorite "jigs" is hanging out in Elvis-ware at the South Burlington Farmers Market in the summer. "It's amazing how people [are] running by, hook their horns and blow me kisses," he says. "It's not like I look good to it."

Asked why Elvis has such enduring magnetism, Harmon suggests it's because his music is so powerful. "Elvis' Great Exploration touches on the 'unhappiness fruit' theme. When she was a kid, she explains, "We weren't allowed to watch her or listen to him — his genetics were scandalous."

Not until she was an adult did Green finally experience Presley's music and movies but further the appeal wasn't the selection of rock and roll. "He had an extraordinary voice, and his concerts were mesmerizing. He put on a show, not just a concert," she says. "He was a man to be respected, he had a powerful personality. He was amazing."

On the school bus one December, Harmon combined his iconography with sex, Elvis and sunglasses. Dressed bare in his own car after work, he says, "I got looks from everyone." Motorists sitting at red lights did double takes, greened by him and waved. "Everyone knows Elvis except lots," Harmon muses. "You can put an Elvis costume on a broom handle, and it'll get a lot of attention."

Come to think of it, Elvis is kind of a Santa Clause for adults. "A lot of people," notes Green semi-seriously, "want to believe Elvis is still alive."

Happy 70th, King ♪

# Burlington Writers Workshop Supplies Words to Hotel Vermont — and Gets a Room of Its Own

BY MARJET HARRISON

**S**ure, it's nice to find a locally crafted chocolate on your pillow in a boutique hotel. But how about a locally crafted sonnet on your bedside table?

That could soon happen at Burlington's new Hotel Vermont, which has entered into an initial partnership with the **BURLINGTON WRITERS WORKSHOP**. As we reported in December on Seven Days' *Live Culture* blog, the hotel will distribute a small compilation of poems, short stories and stories by BWW members to each of its 128 rooms, giving the guests a taste of local lit.

That's in line with Hotel Vermont's branding as an establishment that showcases Vermont products, from food to budding materials to art. "The arts are an integral part of the Hotel Vermont experience," says Marketing Director **YOUNG CARTER** in a December 18 press release.

The compilation will be curated quarterly with BWW organizer **RENNIE KELLOGG** selecting and sometimes soliciting submissions from the group's members, he says. The first installment, featuring work that appeared in *The Best of the Burlington Writers Workshop 2008*, should appear in hotel rooms in the next few weeks, says Carter.

Meanwhile, BWW members are at work assembling a second annual "best of" anthology due out in April. And the free workshop series, which has grown by leaps and bounds since its founding in 2006, has acquired its own dedicated space at Burlington's **THEATRE**.

BWW members are at work assembling a second annual "best of" anthology due out in April. And the free workshop series, which has grown by leaps and bounds since its founding in 2006, has acquired its own dedicated space at Burlington's **THEATRE**.

But she said there is also good news — almost. Carter is in negotiations for another space "that will be even better than the one we are now in" and hopes to announce that very soon.

Carter put a positive spin on the developments in her letter:

The BWW currently counts 456 members on the organizational website ([MontgomeryBell.com](http://MontgomeryBell.com)), Bell says, of whom about 200 are active. That's a lot of writers to squeeze into 15 person workshops on the classic creative-writing class model. Participants read one another's work and offer in-depth critique.

Until recently, the BWW met on the lower floor of downtown's Hallington, which was only available in the evenings. The search for a permanent home, Bell says, "spun out of the overwhelming need for a place to meet during the day." Bell noted the popularity of daytime meetings held at the **YOUNG WOMEN'S PROJECT** headquarters in the Old North End. "We had so many people who said, 'We want a space!'"

Then Bell found herself at Studio 266 (at 266 South Champlain Street) on a First Friday art walk with **COLLEEN MELCHIONI**, a BWW member who has an art studio there. Taking the size and the price he saw over there into account as a spacious room, he says, thinking, "I'll just do it, and I'll hope that everybody backs me up here."

BWW members have indeed come through with substantial contributions, which currently cover about half of the space's \$600 to \$800 monthly rent and heating costs. Last Saturday, they gathered to scrub the room with a coffee maker, couch and other crucial writing utensils. "We have a lot of visual artists among the group, and they all want to put work up on the walls," says Bell. Who



PEOPLE REALLY WANT TO KNOW WHAT THEIR WORK LOOKS LIKE TO SOMEONE ELSE.

PETER BIELLO

WORDS  
Bello — a producer at **VERMONT PUBLIC RADIO** who writes fiction — says he often hears from BWW writers that they like both the "social aspect" and the feedback. "People want to learn how to do what they're doing more effectively. They really want to know what their work looks like to someone else," he says. "Normally [writers] are alone and wondering if they're any good and wondering how they could possibly get better."

And, of course, it helps that the workshops are frequent and free, making it easy for participants to come and go. "Some people arrive at a certain point where they've learned all they want to learn, and they can go off on their own," Bello says. "It's not encouraging dependence on the workshop."

BWW writers may not be dependent on their gatherings, but donations toward rental of the new writing center suggest that a critical mass of them is eager to connect. ☐

## INFO

**ARTISTS:** An evening of stories about them — Thursday, January 26, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Magic Hat Brewing Company in South Burlington. [burlingtonwritersworkshop.com](http://burlingtonwritersworkshop.com)

income and cash flow, want to move in.

In the case of the Hall Keen building, this has been a good sign. They've asked the new car dealership to leave and then taken the four cars stored in and soon *Meijer Lanes* Company will open its bakery. These are all wonderful local businesses and we are happy that they are here and wish them all the very best success.

Seven Days wrote — too optimistically it turned out — about WCA acting in "a stay" in a previous issue of the Arts story and in our year-end

Follow-ups. But Cowen and fellow-owner **JOHN HARRISON** are nothing if not doggedly determined to show and sell art in Milwaukee. In fact, says Cowen, WCA is actively seeking new members and are flagging ahead with plans to move and building a cooperative market.

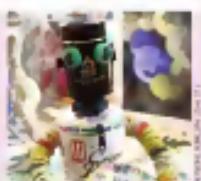
Meanwhile, the store is open through January 30 and notes Cowen, "We are having some amazing sales, including showroom furniture."

Stay tuned for updates here or on the Seven Days blog *Live Culture*.

PAMELA POLSTON

## INFO

[milwaukeearts.org](http://milwaukeearts.org)



B. COHEN, 2009

When we started with the *7 Days* in 2010 none of the commercial spaces were occupied and it seemed nobody wanted them. When artists move in, they make a neighborhood exciting and desirable, and then others, with more

Dear Cecil,

I once read of a construction-industry scandal in New York involving a supplier of large nuts and bolts used to hold together steel beams in skyscrapers. He cheated by substituting cheaper, under-spec nuts and bolts for the proper ones. Evidently several skyscrapers were built using these inferior connectors. The cost to retrofit the buildings would be in the billions of dollars, and only a few have been repaired. What is the chance one or more of these buildings will collapse primarily because of the fraud? Which streets in Manhattan should I avoid, lest one of these behemoths topple as I pass by?

Jim Pacholski, Ohio

**T**hat sounds pretty assembled, bad — I think you've got a couple separate stories mixed up. One involves Chicago Center in midtown Manhattan, which was placed in peril of collapse when bolted joints were substituted for stronger welded ones to save a couple bucks during construction. The other is the equally frightening phenomenon of counterfiet nuts and bolts which, when surreptitiously used instead of the genuine article, can (and did) result in catastrophic failure and death.

**Citibank Center** first. This 39-story building, completed in 1977 and now known as 600 Lexington Avenue, has two notable features first, a distinctive short-topped profile, and second, four main supporting piers, nine stories tall each located in the center of one of the sides of the building's square



footprint rather than in the surface.

The latter evidently then moved some participants in the construction process. Although the building as originally designed could withstand the expected wind loads, the contractor came up with the aforementioned idea of substituting belts for walls in the building's wind-loading system. This wasn't inherently crazy but (among other regrettable decisions) engineers evaluating the change's impact failed to calculate the effect at winds striking the building at a 45-degree angle, at which the structure collapsed.

Not long after completion, the lead structural engineer realized the building could be topped by a storm of a severity that an average was seen in New York once every 18 years. The owners spent a frantic summer strengthening 200 bolted joints with welded-in steel plates.

Working on weekends when the building was unoccupied. The danger thus created didn't become public knowledge until a 1999 article in the *New Yorker*.

To be clear: While belief priests are cheaper, and inherently weaker, nothing I've seen suggests their use in Chemistry. Center was sensible or that the belief themselves were substandard. We found no cases of study dealing by a vendor endangering major buildings in New York or elsewhere. The fact remains that in this age of global supply chains, shoddy counterfeiter documents pose a real concern.

Belts, nuts and other fasteners are commonly used for strength, corrosion resistance and so on. For example, a Society of Automotive Engineers grade 1 belt can hold 60 000 pounds per square inch (PSI) before breaking, while a more expensive grade 8 belt

can hold 150,000 psi. High-performance fasteners are typically stamped with special markings, but it's not hard to create fakes from inferior materials at lower cost. These have been blamed for numerous accidents.

In 1968 counter-clockwise bolts holding together the tail of Pan American Flight 804 came loose, causing the aircraft to disintegrate at 22,000 feet, killing all 55 aboard.

• Counterclock bolts were blamed for a 1985 accident involving a U.S. Army self-propelled howitzer, in which the mechanism that elevates the gun dropped its bolts.

- Counterfeits were suspected in two fatal crane accidents in the 1990s – more about this directly

Bad bolts have also been cited as the cause of two military helicopter accidents, toxic industrial leaks and a broadcasting tower collapse, all of which resulted in fatalities.

by a shady outfit operating out of a popular music parlor.

Most of these cases happened prior to 1990. In that year, following reports that nearly 400 people had been killed over a 15 year period in accidents caused by counterfeit auto and boat parts, Congress passed the *Passenger Safety Act*, which levies stiff fines against suppliers of substandard product. Perhaps as a result, bald eagle stories have subsided — although not disappeared. In 2012 a company called *Extrusion Products* was indicted for selling fake metal rotor locators for Boeing aircraft to the US military. (The fastener in question is popularly known as the “Jesus nail,” presumably because if it falls you’ll be seeing Jesus soon.)

Back to these crane accidents. One of them happened when a construction crane fell off a building in New York, going to the following crushing situation: (a) a Manhattan building was demolished due to a weakness involving bolts, but not due to glass bolts; (b) many people have been crushed to death due to bad bolts; (c) a few of and fatalities were in New York, but (d) quite lately as far as I know - recent NYC crane collapses have avoided things like the faulty ropes at Hurricane Sandy. Truly comfort, but at least one out the door.

INFO

**Is there something you need to get straight?** David Adams can deliver the Straight Dope on any topic. Write David Adams at the Chicago Tribune, 111 East Illinois Street, Chicago IL 60601, or e-mail him at [da@trib.com](mailto:da@trib.com).



# On Fire

An iconic woodstove maker is bringing manufacturing jobs back to Vermont

BY KEN PICARD | PHOTOS BY JEROME LEBROUILLARD

**V**ermont Castings' manufacturing plant is a long, narrow, forest-green building along a railroad line on the outskirts of Rutland. On a recent weekday, the factory, in which 125 employees paint, assemble and finish high-end woodstoves and gas grills for shipment worldwide, was literally humming with activity. You could hear it from the parking lot, where two tractor-trailer trucks were backed up to loading docks.

The underground hum signals a dramatic turnaround for Vermont Castings, which just two years ago was on the brink of bankruptcy and faced a \$10.6 million debt. Creditors of Offshore Strategic Lenders, a private equity firm called the Industrial Company, in view of its obligations, as 43-year-old Liles, along with three others in top management, could purchase the company outright. The entrepreneurial manufacturer saved nearly 200 jobs in Vermont.

Today, Vermont Castings is not only in business but largely debt-free. It's also returning a labor trend that for decades dominated American durable-goods manufacturing. The company is bringing overseas jobs back to the United States.

Robert Ashton means the manuals that give Vermont Castings' woodstoves and grills their smooth and gleaming texture. The 49-year-old Vermont native said the plant is definitely busier than it's been in years. "We've had our rough times in the past," said Ashton. "Hopefully, the economy is turning around and people will buy our higher-end stoves."

Bob Grant, the Rutland plant's general manager, confirmed Ashton's impression of the company's growth — but declined to release any sales figures. Grant, who has been with Vermont Castings for 12 years, said his staff was "very nervous" about the company's future before the purchase was announced on July 30. But Liles, now CEO of Vermont Castings Group, has insisted Vermont employ much more, in part to inform his employees about where the business is headed. Although top managers for Vermont Castings Group are still based mostly in Paris, Ky. — where the company's two prior owners were headquartered — much of its manufacturing is now back in Vermont.

In fact, Grant added, nearly every corner of the 60,000-square-foot manufacturing floor has been put into production. That's partly because all of the company's grill-making work, which was previously being done in China and Mexico, has been re-located to Rutland.



Bob Wright, Vermont Castings' general manager, at a workbench in the Rutland plant.

A high-tech laser cutter, which Vermont Castings purchased a few years ago also enabled the company to bring all of its sheet-metal fabrication back from China. The laser cutter now runs around the clock, producing not only steel stoves but also parts for the grills.

"It reduces the grills and the stoves, our volume at the highest it's been since we've worked here," Grant added.

Operations are also building a few more up front at the company's foundry in Randolph, one of the last remaining cast-iron foundries in North America and the only one owned by a stove manufacturer. Plant manager Bob Wright, who's been

with Vermont Castings since the foundry was built in 1979, said it's been an "exciting season" for him and his 75 employees.

"I've seen a lot of the cycles the company has been through," Wright said, "but from my point of view, this is one of the best scenarios we've had in quite some time."

According to Wright, the foundry pours about 3,500 molds per day of molten iron into cast-iron products and parts of various shapes and sizes, as nearly all are made from scrap iron recycled from automobile wheels and drums. Some are recent rare parts for Vermont Castings woodstoves. Others are products made for other

companies, such as Lodge, a Tennessee-based cookware firm that sells cast-iron pots and skillets.

Over the years, the Randolph foundry has produced everything from cast-iron stadium seats to sinks, bathtubs and ceramic dryers.

Vermont Castings sparked a revolution in woodstove design in the early 1970s. Before then, most were big, noisy, inefficient potbelly furnaces likely to be found in rural firehouses. The founder of Vermont Castings, Duncan Stipek, imagined the functional heat source as the clean, efficient, attractive hearth people camped around today.



## BUSINESS

Recalled Al Willett, who designed woodstoves for Vermont Casting back in the 1980s: "Duncans' shack being at arm's, was if we could make a stove that looks like a piece of furniture, that might be market."

They succeeded. First sold through DIY magazines such as *Mother Earth News*, the company's products became so desirable, a "customer appreciation day" attracted more than 10,000 stove owners to Randolph in the early '90s, according to Willett. In a December 2004 story, Paul Blomberg, a Burlington-based industrial designer, told *Forbes* that Vermont Casting "set the standard, and the rest



of the industry has been playing catch-up ever since."

Richard Wright, publisher and editor of the industry trade magazine *Stoves and Heats* called Vermont Casting "probably the best brand in the industry."

But, like many other companies, Vermont Casting has changed hands numerous times over the years. Some of these owners put profits over product design. As Wright put it, "A brand is like a child. You either take care of it or it goes to hell."

In 2006, Vermont Casting's then-owner company, Minnesota Hearth Systems, was sold to Averidea. Two years later, the stock market crashed and new housing construction dropped to a halt. So, too, did the market for woodstoves, grills and hearths.

In 2010, Wright took a lot of money in the company. Wright and the manager of the purchase couldn't have been worse.

The heating industry has come to a standstill. According to Wright, industrywide sales of all heating appliances — including woodstoves, pellet stoves, gas stoves, fireplaces, inserts and the like — peaked at 2.8 million units in 2006. Those sales figures coincided with rising prices for heating oil, which went from a record low of 40 cents per gallon in February 1989 to a record high of 54.26 per gallon in July 2006. Wright estimated unit sales of all

heating products in 2012 will probably clock in at no more than 160,000 units.

Despite the slow growth in new home construction, the new management team at Vermont Casting Group pursued optimism when it sold recently about the company's sales potential. Reached by phone, Jess Baldwin, senior vice president of sales and customer service, said the company is once again focusing on its signature brands — namely high-end woodstoves, gas grills and fireplace inserts.

How did Baldwin's new boss convince the company's previous owners to write off a \$100-million debt?

"It was actually a good deal for them, too," Baldwin said, "because they wanted to walk away with no future liabilities." Part of the agreement, Baldwin explained, was that the new buyer would accept all past and future risks associated with Vermont Casting — financial, product liability, employee and regulatory. Lest the terms of the CPO offend him, the experience to evaluate the potential risk.

It hasn't all been smooth sailing since the sale was finalized. In the months following Averidea's purchase, management had to, in Baldwin's words, "ring their coats in line" by furloughing 221 jobs in Vermont, Kentucky, Mexico and Canada, mostly at the highest management levels



A worker at Vermont Casting's plant credit: vermontcasting.com

of the company. But Baldwin emphasized that there were no other negative consequences for Vermont Casting's laid-off workforce, such as cuts in wages, hours or benefits.

In fact, the greatest threat to Vermont Casting may be a regulatory one. The much the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's publication proposes emissions standards for all new woodstoves, pellet stoves, wood-fired furnaces and other residential heaters. According to the EPA, in some cases, such as Keene, N.H., wood combustion in winter contributes more than 50 percent of the daily fine particle emissions. The EPA estimates compliance could cost manufacturers between \$16 million and \$25 million a year.

"There's going to put a really great hardship on manufacturers," Baldwin said, "and our concern is that it's going to put the price of stoves beyond the reach of most consumers."

But Vermont Casting employees like Arthur appear to be in for the long haul.

"I had my time for the trash talkers to see what he was going to do with it," Arthur said of Lefebvre's leadership. Arthur was convinced enough to submit a competing idea that earned him a \$15 bonus.

Another worker and the new management group have a fine turkey for Thanksgiving and a \$15 gift card from Walmart for Christmas.

"Thank you back!" There's a new pair of boots," Mike said. "Can't heat that!"

Contact: [henry@sevenger.com](mailto:henry@sevenger.com)

# HIS BEAT GOES ON

Burlington remembers Andy "A-Dog" Williams

BY DAN ROLLES



**A**ndy "A-Dog" Williams, 36, passed away on December 20 following a yearlong battle with leukemia. Most locals knew A-Dog as the area's preeminent turntablist, a phenomenally gifted DJ who was also successful beyond Vermont's borders. He was a fixture in DJ booths around the state, his appearances ranging from holding weekly residencies at Fired Square in Burlington to rocking massive parties with nationally touring DJs for the likes of Burton Snowboards and Gravia.

Besides being a mainstay of the music scene, Williams was one of Burlington's most beloved sons, as evidenced by the candlelight walk and vigil held in his honor a few days after his passing. More than 1,000 people turned out on that chilly December night to celebrate his life.

The procession began on the top block of Church Street and meandered down Main Street. It held up traffic as people from all walks of BTV life, most clutching flickering candles, made their way to the waterfront skate park, one of Williams' haunts. There, participants shared stories and laughter and tears. (For more on the vigil, turn to this week's Sounds like column on page 57.)

As an artist, a performer and most importantly, a friend, Williams made an impact on Burlington that few can claim. How many of us will ever have, by proclamation of the mayor, our own day of tribute? Williams will, on August 30, 2014.

To celebrate his short but brilliant life, Seven Days reached out to some of those lucky enough to have called Williams a friend. What follows are their remembrances. (See also his obituary on page 20.)

## REST IN PEACE, A-DOG.



**Thousands of memories flow through my mind when I reflect upon my beloved moments with Andy Williams.** It seems almost impossible for me to narrow them all down to one. He was and always will be one of the most important people with whom I had the horrible honor to cross paths. Andy was more than a friend; he was a brother to me. We would call each other almost every time we awoke, but we did not use the term in a casual way. We both meant it and knew each other so deeply.

Strength, love, empathy, courage, humor and humility were some of Andy's greatest strengths. So much I have learned from my brother. So much so many have learned from Andy. His existence shall resonate and echo into eternity.

One love,



you got in?" He would ask me. "What's it?" I would smile at him and say, "I don't know what it is, but you've got it." I probably told him that same line a million times. I still don't know what it is, but I know he has it.

I also knew that everybody wanted a piece. He seemed to know everyone, like he had had a personal experience with everyone who came into his sphere. He was always talking, asking questions. And, man, did he have so much style.

make you keep an eye on him at all times. He was a natural. *Asia*.

As we were in our hotel bar bumps in the road, but we were always there for each other without hesitation. Even when he was in fight mode against cancer, he listened and supported me in my battles and struggles. He always had time for the people he loved and for everyone to be part. Oh, that feeling you get when you walked in the club and made eye contact with him in the DJ booth. His smile, his radiant love. One lucky enough to have him will never forget.

**HANNAH DEEME,  
TALENT SPOTLIGHT**

**I was blessed to be friends with Andy Williams for almost 20 years.** When I consider how long that actually is, I feel so lucky. Because 20 years is a very long time to have from someone as caring, compassionate and giving as Andy was.

Andy and I shared a band over our mutual love of music. The sessions we spent putting my records and talking about which record had the sample from that Toto Called Queen or Ricken song simultaneously were the memories and moments that Andy's ability to make a person feel his love of life was his gift, yet he made it feel as though it was something ours to share.

Sharing the chance to experience art with him. Whether he was unexpectedly passed away in his sleep. I was devastated and lost, but found solace in a phone call from a hospital room in Texas — it was Andy Ross with all he was going through. He found a way to call me and make have a dinner feel of the night right up to his hospital bed, and we shared tears of joy through tears. A few weeks later, my mom unexpectedly passed away in her sleep. I was devastated and lost, but found solace in a phone call from a hospital room in Texas — it was Andy Ross with all he was going through. He found a way to call me and make have a dinner feel of the night right up to his hospital bed, and we shared tears of joy through tears.

Andy's talents as a DJ were world-class. And that to me was the epitome of me, a hip-hop. His from the Green Mountains,

but from other world-class talents such as 2-Trip and Rob Swift. As I spoke with friends much as those who came through our little state, they expressed their love with his techniques, rhythm and knowledge as a naturalist.

I spent many hours telling Andy that if he had an agent and the right connections, he could easily be on tour with a major hip-hop act. He did what Andy always did, laughed, agreed and passed his criss for Red Square. He liked the fact that he was able to rock for his human everywhere. His approval of it. And as that, his talents as a remarkable artist failed to compare to his influence on a fine-line rap artist here.

My best example of have caring and unaffected. Andy was as happy a little less than a year ago. A few months after

he had been diagnosed, a group of us local friends dubbed Friends for

A-Dog, threw a fund-raising event to help support Andy's fight. We raised a significant amount of money to help him eat and were all very proud. He watched from his hospital bed, as we had a dinner feel of the night right up to his hospital bed, and we shared tears of joy through tears. A few weeks later, my mom unexpectedly passed away in her sleep. I was devastated and lost, but found solace in a phone call from a hospital room in Texas — it was Andy Ross with all he was going through. He found a way to call me and make have a dinner feel of the night right up to his hospital bed, and we shared tears of joy through tears.

I will live the rest of my life in honor of how he lived his by being altruistic, caring, giving, loving, joyful, appreciative, positive. A true friend.

That was Andy Williams. My dog.

**KYLE THOMPSON, AKA FATTIE B,  
DJ, ARTIST, MUSIC JUNKIE, FRIEND**

**I first met Andy in 1995.** We ran in the same skateboard circle. But it wasn't until he worked for me at the B-Stage that I really got to know him. What was it about A-Dog? I was often baffled by his super energetic, chill personality. He was always smiling around, always in a hurry. He moved slowly but with purpose. The longer we had together, the more deeply we understood each other, and the more deeply we bonded and connected. Our talks were about life, energy, dreams, his mom. He always took care of his mom. As time passed and his outreach grew, Andy started getting invites to travel and DJ more and more gigs. He needed to fly, and I wasn't going to cap his wings. I made sure he could attend all of them!

I watched people fall in love with him, and he with them. I would tell him, "Andy,

you got it!"

**His eyes,  
his smile,  
his radiant love.  
No one  
lucky enough  
to have felt it  
will ever forget it.**

We got a call from our web designer — way back, like 1995 or '96 — about this new terminology called Flub. They wanted us to try it on our site and asked us for a recommendation of an action that they could. Flub. I knew A-Dog's offices were the most beautiful ones I had ever seen. I remember watching them film him in the parking lot on Cherry Street. He brought it. His smile was uncontrollable, his眸子 were sick and he told his body in a manner that



Andy's talents as a DJ were world-class. And that to me was the epitome of me, a hip-hop. His from the Green Mountains,

## His Beat Goes On

**A-Dog, the entertainer.** Not only onstage playing those records, but any time you hung out at his house, went skateboarding or snowboarding, he was always making you laugh or discover something new he was into. But on the same hand, you were entertained here, with your personality, your stories and your own discoveries. It was a two-way street with Andy, equal-equal all the time.

The A-Dog motto: Talk about decision in presenting his work and entertaining the masses! You could count on a new A-Dog mixtape every two months, with an original collage on the cover, track listing, digital download and the whole nine. If you break it down, he's probably

with skates and snowboard anchors and said, "Silent at it!" That's where I am sure his other obsession came from, because he was like a kid in a candy store. He left with, like, a hundred stickers.

Months later, that same crew moved on to Burlington to be closer to the skates, snow, party and DJ culture. At this point Andy was not a DJ yet. He worked at the Shambala and T.J. Maxx. He cleaned and cleaned work. He saved and saved and had to asked one roommate — that was plugged into a tape deck. This is where he began to experiment with mixing and making extremes for his friends. Later, he would buy a mixer and the second turntable.

He then lands his dream job working at the A-Side, surrounding himself in action-

itis hard for me to remember exactly when I first started hanging with Andy. I used to be a DJ on WILV from the early to late 1990s. This was before the internet, social media and in the early days before a lot of local venues would even have a laptop DJ. Cleaning out a DJ box was mostly done at house parties. It was literally an underground movement referred to as basement house parties. Skating and snowboarding were treated sort of the same way. That's what made it so cool. Being so far away from major cities, we somehow figured it out and did our own.

I think it was at one of these basement parties that I first met Andy. He was a little younger than me, and I had been DJing for a long time by the time he first started. But I could tell he was definitely the one to

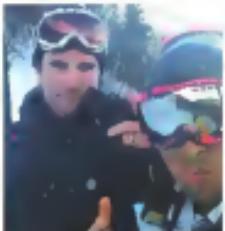
"Help Andy and Joss [Soundflic, Andy's girlfriend] out right now" mode.

That show at Higher Ground with DJ 2-Trip was gigantic. 2-Trip had performed on the Grammys the night before, then hopped on a flight and came over here for Andy the next day. He put his heart into that show, and Andy was rocking us live, every song, tearing back and forth. It was amazing how many people came out. That was the first time I was able to see how much he had affected so many different people. All types of Burlingtonians came out, including the mayor. Although he did not personally know Andy, Mayor Welsbanger was as proud of his city for coming together to support one of its own.

A couple of days before Andy passed, I rushed out to Mayor Welsbanger to let



PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN



one of the most "listened to" DJs on the planet over the last decade. It's crazy how many times he put that out!

In skateboarding and snowboarding, style plays a really big role, so you need to graduate toward the riders who are really cool and do it with style. Andy had both of these in spades while riding a board, but his DJ style was on point. You always tried to get near the DJ booth when he was playing, so you could see the master at work!

**DEAN BLITZ** **GRAY**  
PHOTOGRAPHER  
BURTON SNOWBOARDS

I met Andy on Burlington in 1994 while skateboarding by the sun on Cherry Street. Andy was with his St. Albans crew — Mike Bay and Mark Wood. They all must have been 16 or 17 years old. Old enough to drive to Burlington to skateboard for the day. I could tell right away that these guys were having a "coming-of-age moment," especially Andy — his eyes were about to pop out of his head. After our session, I never then took to our apartment on North Willard Street. That apartment was covered with skateboards, snowboards, boats, goggles, etc. I pulled out a thin box filled

with culture skating, snowboarding and DJing the infamous basement parties. At this point he's not yet starting at local clubs.

Now it's summer 1996, and the movie *Friday* is super popular with all of us — we started it live for him constantly for months. The only VHS tapes we owned were about videos and Friday. One day I'm in the A-Side and showing out lines from the movie to various friends. "What up, dog?" to somebody. "What up, dog?" to another person. I see Andy head the counter, and he is name-begged with an "A."

"What up, A-Dog?"

Everybody always wanted to be around Andy because he always had a big smile and was happy to see you. He was always genuine and wanted to have how things were going with you. We spent a lot of time together and always gave each other support with our careers and loyal to share each other's success.

We kept in contact every week during his battle via text message, and he was completely positive and inspiring the entire time.

**SETH HEARY**  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR, SPINN STUDIO  
BURTON SNOWBOARDS

watch from the new kids. He was, from the very beginning, one of the most technical DJs anywhere. On a personal note, being a minority here in VT, you sort of notice other minorities doing the same thing as you, and maybe that was one of the things that brought us together in the beginning.

Over the years, we stayed connected. I moved out west for a while and moved back to town a little over five years ago. My first gig back was with DJ DJ and Andy. Andy was one of the ones who encouraged me to get back into it. He was, however, without a doubt, the best DJ in town. From a technical standpoint, his mere knowledge, the fact that he'd make his own music, edits, etc. He knew how to read a crowd and always get it crackin'. He knew how to take that guy with the underground request but also keep the crowd hyped on whatever new pop happened to be, well, popping.

When I got the news that he was sick, I kind of went into cross-contamination mode and connected with folks I've seen what we could do to help. A few days after Christmas, a bunch of local DJs got up at Starbucks and rallied together for hosting a few fundraising events. Friends for A-Dog came out of that meeting. We organized looks into smaller groups focused on various parts, and eventually went into

bars knew that Andy's health had turned for the worse. The mayor was out west on holiday with his family and sent his condolences. A couple of days later, our friend Dave Driscoll reached out on a few of us and said that he and his sister had contacted the mayor's office and that it had approved establishing an A-Dog Day. There was a very short window of time to decide the proclamation — basically an hour. I pulled over and had my wife drive. I prayed for the words to best describe my friend. Sorry five minutes later, I can't think of words. Sorry five minutes later, I can't think of words. An hour later a proclamation came back to me.

The next morning I went to pick up the physical copy and was told that the mayor wanted me to read it to the cap on his hat. I did. I read it to the cap on his hat. I did. I read it to the cap on his hat. That was a big honor for me. That's my hometown. Andy was one of my good friends and we're going to send his off like the long he was.

The vigil was an amazing experience. We came together in love to celebrate his legacy, and it was one of the most special nights that town has ever known. It was the best party I've been to here in the Queen City the night we said barking lame.

**LULU CALDERON**  
BURTON SNOWBOARDS, DJ

**Andy "A-Dog" Williams will be missed and never forgotten.**

**He was a true legend.**

I first met Andy Williams, later known as Olson and eventually as the infamous A-Dog, when we moved from New Jersey to St. Albans in third grade. We grew up a few blocks from one another. In our childhood, we connected through fence breaking, sessions, BMX and freestyle biking, listening to U2, UO and the Rapetrol Gang, rocking the finest purchased pants we could find. We formed a group called the "BMX library" and were selected to teach the kindergarten students at City Elementary our craft. This is where our earliest goals, goals, ambitions and aspirations were drafted in, budding around the OG, brass box.

As we grew up, goals changed from bikes to video games, metal to big hop. Andy picked up his first musical instru-

I was very fortunate to have spent my younger years as one of Andy's best friends. I met him around 1985 at St. Albans High School, where he was hosting BMX and bike photos made out of construction paper. Of course, I thought one at a better rate than most of the other kids.

I think we ended up making a connection because we both came from single mother families that always tried their best to give us what they could from what little they had. We started riding freestyle bikes together and staying up late at sleepovers, waiting for "Habibi's Ball" to come on MTV. His love for music and art was something he always had.

Then one of our other best friends came into the picture, Bill Dupree, bearing



ment, the electric guitar. He, of course, taught himself and was very good. We transformed drivelines to teenagers, taking roadtrips to the S-Side in Burlington, partying in fields with friends. We made short videos with the high schools' AV equipment. Those years were fun, positive and full of exploring.

Andy was a good student and graduate in 1993. I joined the Army at age 17 and Andy saw me off, assuring me everything was going to be OK, as he always did. Four years later, I was reunited with him in Burlington. While living in South Korea, I became interested in DJing. Andy took me to FLEX Records and introduced me to their 8-track. He helped me buy my first pair of turntables and showed me the art of the mix.

We spent the rest of our adult years together connecting through music and DJ culture. I will forever grateful for Andy Williams, DJ A-Dog. He taught positivity, kindness and patience and he was ultra-giving. He was the best friend anyone could ever have or want. I am extremely happy to have had him in my life for 28 years. Will carry a piece of him in my heart forever. I love you, Andy.

**JUSTIN REHMILLARD**  
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# Auto Motivated

Legally blind Charlotte mechanic Edsel Hammond has a feel for car repair

BY MARK DAVIS

**Y**ou won't find Edsel Hammond's garage listed in the yellow pages or advertised anywhere, and you wouldn't know it was there if you passed it. A small sign hanging in the window says "Edsel's Tires and Service," but it faces toward his adjacent house on a quiet Charlotte road.

Most of Hammond's customers are old friends, or friends of old friends, who recommend him to others. Only on rare occasions does he need to greet a customer with a friendly disclaimer, asking if they have heard of his unusual circumstance. He is legally blind, the result of a genetic eye condition that began in his mid-twenties.

Hammond, now 45, was diagnosed as a bby with eyes before he even born. His grandfather owned a gas station. His skin was an inky blue man. Indeed, Hammond has spent his life as a car mechanic, and his two sons also work in mechanics at a local dealership.

"Most call him Edsel," says childhood friend Karen Brown.

And about that name. Hammond's parents owned a 1958 Ford Edsel, a short-lived vehicle that would one day make Time magazine's list of the 10 worst cars of all time.

Though his first name is Donald, even his parents ignored it; his mom registered him for elementary school as D. Edsel Hammond.

"They find they didn't have a 'C' there," he jokes.

Growing up in Charlotte, young Edsel wasn't much for school, and while most of his buddies talked about girls and sports, he talked cars. In his free time, he would ride dirt bikes or mow lawns through farmers' fields or on Mt. Pisgah, writing more than a few lawns and park rangers.

On weekends, Hammond helped his dad at Nester's Ford (now Mercedes-Benz) in South Burlington. A prompt-processor, he restored jalopies he bought for a song and sold as a 1988 Mercury Bobcat with a rolling apart-body and an engine that could barely turn the front wheel.

"He had a lot of natural mechanical ability. The cars he bought were all reliable parts, and he would get them going and make them last a long time," Brown recalls. "It's not something anybody could do — buy a \$300 car and make it reliable transportation."



Edsel Hammond

During his senior year in high school, Hammond got vocational school credit for working with his dad, and he stayed at the dealership after graduating. He liked the camaraderie and job security. He liked being near to several Ford dealers outside Boston, where mechanics would be brought about the latest vehicles.

It was the life he wanted, Hammond says, the only one he had contemplated. His to-enough-times slipped into his resume.

And then, on a routine afternoon drive in his Ford Bronco, Hammond got something as one of his eyes. In the

moment when he reflexively shut the eye, he noticed something odd. The vision in his other eye seemed to have a gap or it. Over time the gap grew, and eventually Hammond made an appointment with an eye doctor. He was diagnosed with Leber hereditary optic neuropathy (LHON), a rare, severe degeneration of retinal cells that affects primarily young men.

Several surgeries and treatments failed, and Hammond's vision grew worse.

In April 1993, he went to Johnson for a wood of road hogging with friends. The following week, he drove himself to

Bletcher Allen hospital in Burlington for a low-dash procedure. It was the last time he would drive — at least legally.

When Hammond woke up in the hospital the next morning, he remembers, the vision in his bad eye had gone entirely black, and the other eye was almost as much.

None of his sight returned, but the operation was a failure. Hammond's vision is 10/1000; we'll pass the legal threshold for blindness. Today, his peripheral vision resembles the grainy images on an old television, he describes, and his central vision is "scrunchie-up mess."

After several months of recovery, Hammond — who at this point was married and had two young boys — tried to resume his job at the dealership. But he was told the company's owner wouldn't tolerate a blind mechanic working on the premises.

Hammond grabbed his toolbox and left.

"It was heart-wrenching," Brown says. "He's such a good person. Edsel was always my personal moral compass. He's the kindest person I've ever known. For something so life-altering to happen to someone so good didn't seem fair."

For a while, Hammond worked odd jobs, putting it together. And he collected driftwood. But he belonged in a garage. So with the help of family and friends, Hammond built one out in his basement.

In 1997, five years after walking away from the auto business, Hammond opened his own garage in his front yard.

How does he do it? "You might expect that every tool would be laid out in a precise, predictable order. But on a recent afternoon, Hammond's shelves look as disheveled as those of any other mechanic: his tools are lined up neatly, but small minor blocks and nuts are scattered everywhere. His tool box's toolbox bins are, however, laid out exactly different than it was when he could see.

"Things could be more organized," Brown says, but then I wouldn't find anything," Hammond says. "I know where everything is."

But he knows much of his equipment, and eyes, by feel. It's hard to tell Hammond if blind until you watch him put his free right hand into a box, lay it out or break pads.

He occasionally calls one of his sons or a friend for help, and he has to pass on some projects involving electrical work — it's tough to differentiate the tangles of wire.

But Hammond works willingly, getting on tight bolts, or necessary and difficult to embrace his weaknesses. He has little



# Lightning Strikes

From Merrill Lynch to the Mad River Valley: Win Smith tells a corporate love story

BY PAUL HEINTZ | PHOTOS BY JOR WALLACE-BRODEUR

**N**ot until the darkest hours of the 2008 financial crisis did Merrill Lynch's thundering herd finally stampede off a cliff. On the cuspless September weekend that saw the collapse of Lehman Brothers, government regulators逼迫了 the Bank of America into buying a debt-saddled Merrill for a fire-sale price of \$50 billion.

It was an epiphany end to a 58-year-old banking empire, which in its finest moments sought to democratize the financial-services industry and make Wall Street more accessible to Main Street.

But in the view of Winthrop H. Smith Jr., the seeds of Merrill's collapse were sown in August 2005, long before the sale. That's when a doctrinaire new company president, E. Stanley O'Neal, began replacing the firm's old guard with an entrepreneurial mindset and dispensing with the company's client-focused traditions, which had long been enshrined in a venerable list of "the Principles."

Smith, a 28-year veteran of Merrill Lynch who now lives in Warren and owns Biggarish Beans, was among the casualties of O'Neal's 2005 purge. And in a new, self-published book, *Catching Lightning in a Bottle: How Merrill Lynch Revolutionary the Financial World*, Smith blames Merrill's downfall on O'Neal's abandonment of the company's culture in favor of profitable but pernicious derivatives.

"My feeling was that the firm would at least be remembered," Smith said last week in the cultured environs of Biggarish. "One House Lodge after taking a bitterly cold run on the mountain he owned, 'I never thought it could be brought down, but I knew it was going to be marginalized.'

To the skeptic, he might appear a smug self-servings. As the son of one of the firm's early leaders, he had long been groomed to take over the institution. But in July 2006, the company's board of directors passed over Smith and two other candidates to name O'Neal president, setting him up to become the company's next chief executive officer.

Two months later, when the new boss took over, Smith's position, heading Merrill's foreign arm and its international private-client group, the former heir apparent declined a highly ceremonial position and quit the firm. Within a few years of his

## BOOKS



Winthrop H. Smith

### CATCHING LIGHTNING READS MORE LIKE A FAMILY SAGA.

Smith had sold every stock he owned in the company, his inheritance rebounded.

As it turns out, Smith was on the right side of history. His inheritance of O'Neal, largely ignored during Merrill's outsize and rapidly profitable years of 2005 and 2006, now seems prescient. That O'Neal is widely regarded these days as the villain of the Merrill saga, Smith said, made *Catching Lightning* easier to pen.

"It would have been [difficult] to write probably eight years ago. It isn't now," he said. "I don't need to sound like a sour grapes. I could, you know, put a little color on it, but everybody knows what he did."

Smith's book isn't entirely about Merrill's final years — or even about the three decades he spent at the firm. Smith chronicles, in great detail, Merrill's rise

from a scrappy little brokerage house to a world financial power. And he centers his story on the 13 men who led the firm, from the visionary Charlie Merrill to his own, underdog father, Winthrop H. Smith Jr., to John Thain, the Goldman Sachs exec who presided over Merrill's sale to Bank of America.

Smith knows every one of these men. He grew up in the shadow of what his employees referred to as "Mother Merrill" and his corporate history reads more like a family saga. The chairman and CEO's various come-sorrows as a several grandfather, a respected father, a sturdy uncle or a nefarious do-good cousin.

Thanks to the collaboration of co-author and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist William R. Brodberg, *Catching Lightning* is imbued with meticulous research. Back in 1999, Merrill's communications department hired Brodberg to write a history of the company, and he, in part, on years of consulting through the decades, let O'Neal borrow the project in 2003.

Six years later, after Brodberg saw a vision of Smith delivering a powerful eulogy for the firm at its final shareholders meeting, the writer reached out to the former executive to propose a joint project.

"It was pretty obvious to me that, one, he had a great affection for the company, and, two, he let it be known he'd been seriously damaged by O'Neal. So I gave him a call," Brodberg said in a phone interview. "I said, 'I think we really ought to do this because I've got all this material, all this background information.'"

For three and a half years, the two drafted chapters and sent them back and forth, editing each other's work.

"He's not a writer, he's a businessman. But as a writer, he's pretty good," Brodberg said of Smith. "He's a better writer than I am a businessman."

While Brodberg focused on the company's earlier history, Smith drafted the later chapters chronicling the era in which he played a role. Perhaps as a result of that process, *Catching Lightning* can feel like



## FROM CATCHING LIGHTNING IN A BOTTLE: HOW MERRILL LYNCH REVOLUTIONIZED THE FINANCIAL WORLD

Having appointed Merrill Lynch president in 1981, Stanley Smith was never far from an armchair, so just as he was settling in, he wrote to his wife: "I hope these are the last words I ever write to you to advise you of my plans. This is going to take a lot of time. We are going to have to change a lot of things about the way things are being run. As soon as we get rid of Romano, we can get started running this place the right way." When I called him at home in Glens Falls, he was the newspresident, talking about disaster-relief, and senior partner David H. Komansky the chairman and CEO of another citizen.

Smith launched into a scathing attack on his old "friend" Merrill — "he's the last words he's ever going to say to me" — and the reason was the Los Angeles-based investment firm that had made the company's revenue by 1980 100 times since its inception. Alone in his office, he grew pale and left his marks scrawled on the wall as he berated his team. "Every time this man was contributing about our heritage and our prestige in the business world," I interjected. "I'm sure he's been doing the same thing to you," I said. "Stan, I want you to say for your own good that I can't work for you if you keep up this kind of talk, so you should concentrate on O'Neill."

two different books. And it drags in places, detailing yet another boardroom meeting, corporate jet ride or unseemly promotion of a partner's secretary.

But finance is little bundle of knowledge that only Smith could deliver: *Catching Lightning*.

When the elder Smith retired in 1985, his partners renamed the company in his honor, calling it Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith. After a wave of publicity about the name change, the younger Smith's Kipper East Side school in Massachusetts received a suspicious phone call; it was from

"I wish I'd gotten to hear him longer than that," he writes. "I think about him every day."

It wasn't until the younger Smith graduated from business school and, after much bussiness, took a job at Merrill that he came to know his father through the stories of his new colleagues. The firm, as it was, became a sponge to father.

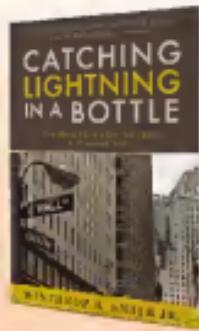
So when O'Neal came to power in 2001 and pushed Smith to the exit, it was as if the latter were being banished from his own family — before he could realize his dreams of becoming its patriarch.

After word leaked to the press of his departure from the top of Merrill's international private client group, Smith writes, he summoned his team members to a conference room to inform them of the news.

"Sometimes once and you can never hear a film because it can't live you back," he told the crowd. "Well, this person never knew Merrill Lynch."

Even then, before the media deluge about years, Merrill Lynch had long since outgrown its role as the middleclass brokerage house that radically transformed the banking business in the mid-20th century.

It was Merrill, led at the time by the elder Smith, that first understood how much money could be made by looking beyond the U.S. market and the coastal cities. Under Goldman Sachs and J.P. Morgan, Merrill Lynch's branch offices in Middle America, preoccupied as brokers from charging commissions and instead at ingenious advertising campaigns at a middle



class that had never dreamed of investing in the stock market.

Remarkably, its leaders convinced America to trust Wall Street.

Sixty years later, that trust is gone — in a scintillating part because of Merrill's own mistakes. And that clearly pains Smith.

"It's odd, because 99 or 99 percent of the people on Wall Street are really good people trying to do the right things," he said. "You do see some people on Wall Street behaved and brought [the financial crisis] about is really upsetting. I wish the leaders on Wall Street got a little bit better. I wish they could relate to the average person and they weren't so arrogant and as greedy. The firms need to be taken over by a different set of characters, in my opinion."

Sadly missing from *Catching Lightning* is Smith's most fascinating story: how he escaped from a New York City brother to a Vermont ski-slope避难所.

Not long before his ouster from Merrill, Smith had started up with a pair of Mid-River Valley residents to buy the mountain from the American Skiing Company, which had run a ski resort on the ground. The deal closed on September 10, 2001, the day before 9/11. Of Merrill's New York City-based employees were forced to evacuate their headquarters when terrorists drove planes into the adjacent World Trade Center.

Smith had initially planned to be an absentee owner of Sugarbush, but a few years after he left Merrill, he decided to take charge.

"I realized this is not an investment

where you're just passive," he said. "I decided I really wanted to put my own imprint on it. That's when I decided to move here full time and make this a second career."

In a way he was living up to the prediction of Donald Regan, the former secretary of the treasury and Merrill CEO who told Smith when the latter left the firm, "I sure as hell hope you're not going to disappear and become a hermit in Vermont."

An average day for Smith is spent on the mountain and his messages to all: more than 100 days a year. But most of the time, he's working to improve the business, which he has turned a profit in recent years. With the help of foreign investment through the federal EB-5 program, he has expanded the resort's hotel arms and built new lodges and condos.

Central to his success is Warren Smith, son, see the lessons he learned from his last job.

"I basically took the Merrill Lynch principles that I believed in and brought them here," he said. "Christians with your clients' interests come first. Your guests' interests come first. That's important. You think about how you act. Are you doing it to make money, or are you doing it to provide a good service that, in turn, will make money?"

Given his continuing affection for the firm, would both brothers have Warren to return to *Merrill Lynch*?

Four and a half years ago, he tried. In the summer of 2009, not quite a year after Bank of America took over their old company, Smith and two other former executives invited to Charlottesville to see whether its new owner might be willing to sell it back to them.

"We had a brief discussion, but there was no interest," Smith said.

Nowadays, that doesn't go.

"You know the old phrase: 'You can never go home again.' I'd do those 20 years all over again, but now that I've left, I've moved on," Smith said. "Now that I really live this in a second career, I wouldn't want to do that again."

## INFO

*Catching Lightning in a Bottle: How Merrill Lynch Transformed the Financial World by Shamus H. Tamm, Jr. with Jason Tamm (608 pages, \$26.95 hardcover, \$24.95 paperback).*

After that, the 85-year-old Stan Smith was exposed to others' each day by press conferences.

At its core, *Catching Lightning* is a love story about an investment bank, which you wouldn't expect to have much resonance in a post-Occupy Wall Street world.

But it works because that love story is really rather affecting. In 1964, when Stan was just 31 years old, his father died of Parkinson's disease.

# Chugging Along

First Bite: 10 Railroad Street

BY ALICE LEVITT

**M**onroeville is not exactly a culinary hotbed. Or rather, it wasn't one. For almost a decade, the Blue Krone was the only decent destination on most railroaders' radar.

Last summer, that began to change. Now arrived Louie Nathan Brewing, started by a former union director, who came not only for the job but for some of Monroeville's most creative pub grub. There, in October, the town's old train station, most recently home to McMen's Restaurant, reopened as an upscale casual eatery. Co-owner Kim Kaufman calls it Railroad Street's "wayfarer's haven," with fresh take on comfort food for dinner and from-scratch sandwiches at lunch.

Owners Kaufman and Jim Clarksmith burst onto the Monroeville dining scene after a false start in Steubenville less than a year before. Already the owners of the Blue Donkey, they ploughed down \$1.5 million to take ownership of their former Monroeville Road neighbor, the Rusty Nail. The deal closed just after the previous owner turned out to owe the bank \$270,000 in back taxes. Steubenville also had claimed the property for unpaid water fees.

While Monroeville has been no stranger to the formerly New York City-based restaurateurs, they've given Monroeville a thoroughly comfortable restaurant experience. On a cold night last week, 10 Railroad Street was as cozy, even when the lit fire pits weren't exactly on track.

Our server, Mike, seemed genuinely excited to meet us. Once he learned we were from Pittsburgh, he spent the meal chattering us up about Chesapeake County restaurants.

The restaurant's wide-open spaces are loosely decorated with a mix of themes, including army-style mud-and-white photos of stations and cars hanging from the sage-green walls. In the hallway that leads to the bathrooms, new wood floors give way to a person-size track, down which I couldn't resist chugging.

The menu follows suit, with appetizers labeled



## BAD CASSOULET MAKES ALICE AN ANGRY GIRL, BUT A GOOD PURÉE CAN CHEER HER UP.

"Boarding Passes" and "the Dining Car" and coffee drinks named for famous stations.

We ordered our tipples from the "Modern Martini" menu. The Kursaal Stinger looked like a sophisticated martini for a grown-up, but don't let your kids near the thing. The combination of shallot-diced Kielbasa and Frings beer would ram those tiny hepatic括约肌 before they reached double digits. Even that the drink

reminded me of clear, liquid Nutella, it might have been better suited for dessert.

Not that I had any complaints about pairing the cocktail with the contents of the basket that emerged gratis just after we ordered. Tossed with the randomly selected meaty accompaniments for fish and chips, it remained not bread but the Blue Donkey's signature fried-croissant Donkey chips. The hot, ultra-thin chips were a well-seasoned surprise, but

most of them suffered from a slight burnt taste.

When I interviewed Kaufman just before the opening of 10 Railroad, she described the restaurant as an opportunity for Blue Donkey chef Kieran McMenelley to show off his more creative side, tested in New York and Seattle fine-dining restaurants. The Spanish salad was indeed a showcase for McMenelley's talents, as well as a refreshing palate cleanser after the chips.

CHUGGING ALONG: 10 RAILROAD

More food after the classifieds section. page 4



# 11 SIDE dishes

BY EDEN HIRSCH & ALICE LEVITT

## Breakfast, Lunch, History

PAULINE DUNCAN IS REOPENING WITH NEW OWNERS

In its eighth year, things weren't looking too bright for the South Burlington space long occupied by the PARKWAY DINER. In September, a lone user forced owner Maggi Hall to close his small Arcadia Diner. But since last month, the Worcester Lunch Car has been as busy as we've ever seen it. That's thanks to new owner CORBY HORTON, who has re- created the Parkway Diner menu.



New Year's breakfast hash

The Colchester native says he's a lifelong diner aficionado who frequented now-closed lobby's Blue Line Diner since he was a kid. Following 10 years in the kitchen at Arcadia, he describes waded his way through the kitchens of Maggi's' Arcadia and Franklin County diners, as well as that of WESTERLY ALLEN MEAL CO., where he learned to add a local touch to his comfort cuisine. "I've got about 20 years invested in breakfast-and-lunch diners situations," says the young cook. "We were about what we do."

For now, the Parkway Diner is open seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., though Gottschald says he may soon drop Monday. The diner is served all day and includes all the basics, such as fluffy pancakes and enormous French toast, both served with real

maple syrup. Gottschald remains in-house for hot and cold lunch sandwiches. "You pull the sandwich out to taste it, and there's a big whiff of maple instead of just plain flavor," he says, describing the olfactory rewards of his a la carte.

Traditional sandwiches are made by barbecue, while the burgers include a black-bean patty and a beef burger with cheddar, bacon and apple. Gottschald says he plans to keep his menu small to allow for fresh-ups each day and other specials.

The next big step for the restaurant is to open its doors to the public on Feb. 1. According to **WENDELL CROZIER**, the now-defunct Green Mountain Chow Chow owner, the event will introduce **GOOD TASTE**, an event dedicated to promoting the region's food.

The event takes place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Albans City Hall. According to **WENDELL CROZIER**, the now-defunct Green Mountain Chow Chow owner, the event will introduce **GOOD TASTE**, an event dedicated to promoting the region's food.

The community's biggest event yet, in Good Taste will host approximately 45 vendors from Franklin County and the Chittenden Islands. Gottschald says he's especially proud to introduce participants to the region's drink producers, including **WENDELL CROZIER** COMPANY, tea master **PAUL HOMPLAINE**, **HOMEPLACE**, **ROB HARVEY**, owner of **BAR BOP**, barrel-aged maple vodka, and **TRAVIS REINHOLD**, which offers flavored, maple-harvested waters. Those who want more than just a cup can move from small samples to a cash bar.

For those more interested in eating, local firms will offer samples of their wares, such as pulled-pork or sausage-egg-and-cheese sandwiches from **PIZZA'S**, **PIZZA'S**, and **BEAR'S**, and soups from **CHITTENDEN FAMILY FARMS**. Restaurants such as **LAUREL INN** and **JOE'S RESTAURANT** will join in on the act with menu items, too.

— A. L.

## Franklin County Fare

NEW TASTING EVENT IN ST. ALBANS

Franklin County farmers and producers don't always get the media love that, say, Colchester County drivers. But the northeast corner of Vermont is working hard, too.

**SOON SMITH**, executive director of the **FRANKLIN COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT** commission, decided to do something about it.

On February 25, the local businesses and associations that make up the area's diversified ag community will introduce **GOOD TASTE**, an event dedicated to promoting the region's food.

The event takes place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Albans City Hall. According to **WENDELL CROZIER**, the now-defunct Green Mountain Chow Chow owner, the event will introduce **GOOD TASTE**, an event dedicated to promoting the region's food.

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Want to learn more about

Franklin County's culinary culture? There's no better place to chat them up and try their treats.

— A. L.

## Misery Loves ... Croissants

MISERY LOVED TO SPREAD

WEDNESDAY JAN. 16, 2013

It's been almost a year since the *disaster* of the

Wineglass event when Cappi's Italian had to evacuate. Now the place is back to **business** and **CROISSANTS** are returning to it as a bakery and coffeehouse.

The rocks will start falling at 28 **Wineglass Way** by late January or early February when **WINEGLASS** opens its doors, says **MICL** co-owner **CARLA WHIT**. She sounds happy to flex **MICL**'s baking muscles just a month from its first anniversary at 64 Main Street. "We were doing our own rolls" and other items at the restaurant, Whit says, but space was at a premium. "This space was just enormous."

The bakers hope to sell croissants, fresh-baked and **MICL**'s popular lemon-zest doughnuts, as well as an array of to-be-determined baked goods. "We haven't really gotten that far into planning" the menu, says Whit, as she and chef-partner **ARMIN JAHNKE** and **ROBINE WILKE** are working on the necessary equipment.

One thing they know for sure: **MICL** Bakery will offer java from Portland-based Stampin' Coffee Roasters and have a few tables inside, plus places to sit on the sidewalk during the warmer. "It's definitely not going to be a 'soufflé around all day' kind of place, but more of a quick stopover," says Laura White, for people to grab coffee, bread and pastries to go.

Also new to the Wineglass, the new space will serve as a community for a re-organized **MICL** catering arm. Does that mean big bad, the company's food truck, will be plying the streets of Burlington again soon? One can dream.

— C. H.



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## Chugging Along

The scene was touting the greens with shaved foie gras and a lightly creamy orange vinaigrette. Though a winter dish at its core, the salad was like a white wine: it was the cold meatiness — marmalade and full of flavor. I liked the addition of thinly sliced, bacon-cured salmon, but the dish would have been just as good without it.

Salade claire was a way with fruity dressings. The basic Radhead salad was dressed with raspberry vinaigrette; number two was not too tangy.

Explained that vinaigrettes are a side salad accompanying the classic macaroni and cheese. I am more than ready for the mac-and-cheese to meal-train to be dead and buried. Since four different iterations (including one with lobster and truffle shavings) occupy their own section of the 10 Radhead menu, I figured I had to try one.

Beyond the radishes I experienced when I consumed a dish with so little variety, my biggest problem with most macaroni-and-cheese offerings is that restaurant tend to serve them in topless dry. Thankfully that was not an issue at 10 Radhead. The creamy gouda had plenty of creamy sauce, whose not-too-sharp character reminded me of a remoulade or even of Kraft Macaroni & Cheese. That's not a dig. With a sheaf of herbs and bread croutons, the dish was a well-executed riff on many Americans' equivalent of Kraft's macaroni.

Marcel would probably have shared my excitement at trying the next course. On 10 Radhead's original menu, a rabbit cassoulet called to me. The protein had disappeared to back by the time I arrived, but I can argue with the choices unless their execution leaves something to be desired. This one did.

The Academie Universelle du Cassoulet promises many dishes not taken on the basic French cassoulet, but I suspect the great members would have upon bringing the dish to the table realized (shall we say more than a little al dente) when beans that formed the base of this dish. The braising liquid was heavy with garlic and definitely compared the French countryaise in its own way, but the stew needed more character. There were only two other bits of courage mixed in with the legumes. More of the same, or of elsewhere, would have helped.

But the duck leg that hung in the corner of the gigante bowl was the saddest part of all. Rather than being presented as a traditional confit, the game tasting lost its undercookedness and undercooked. As it got closer to the bone, it was nearly raw and exceedingly tough.

Bad cassoulet makes Alice an angry girl, but a good pause can cheer her up. The sommelier's description of the



buttermilk-squash hash that came alongside the grilled pork loin was my primary reason for ordering that entrée. I made the right choice.

The squash smelled strongly of fresh ginger over before the plate hit the table in my mouth, vanilla bean along with the spicy root and the sweet squash. When I finished it, a gingery burn remained in the back of my throat. For Marmalade, this was a risk that paid off abundantly.

The rest of the dish was well-made, two A+ pair of grilled pork chops mixed of flavor but remained juicy. Green

beans were lemon-kissed and cooked to snap-perfection.

In this case, my advice to the restauranteur would be to offer less on the plate. The \$19 entrée was composed of two piles of meat, such topped with a pork chop. When I had the second set for dinner the following night, the combination made a filling request on its own. It would be nice to be able to order half the dish for half the price.

The same could be said of the cassoulet. After our dinner in Mammoth, my dining partner saw the dish again over the course of two lunches. At \$31, that was a great value, but diners might appreciate the option of more reasonable portions at a lower cost.

The star dish was reserved with dessert. I don't usually expect to pay \$8 for a sweet dish unless it's prepared by someone named Beard or Yama. All right, that's an exaggeration, but I was still surprised at the price-to-size ratio of my deconstructed tiramisu.

I give big points to the chef for making every element of the dessert from scratch, but not all succeeded. The sweet chocolate cake on one side of the rectangular plate couldn't seem to decide whether it wanted to be like cake or simply crumbly-decayed frosting one. I loved the hazelnut marmalade that capped it, but the hazelnut graham cracker on top of that was overly thick and hard to bite through. The pistachio gelato was a scoop of chocolate on cream. Though it was a tawny rich dark as I might have liked, the texture was delectably creamy, and thick drizzles of chocolate sauce added depth to the flavor.

Marmalade is a short walk from Burlington, so it may not be hindrance immediately, but 10 Radhead will be on my short list when I'm in the area. And for diners in Lamoille County who want to avoid the Stowe tourist trap, it will probably chug along just as their regular rotation. ☺

## INFO

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Ingredients for making bitters and vermouths

# Cabin-Fever Drinks

Use your next snow day to make bitters, infused wine or vermouth

BY CORIN HIRSCH

**W**hen winter settles in, our bones, dry bitters can energize, loosening hips, scrapping, organizing, those mission states of mind (or – making vermouths?)

It may not be the most traditional of crafts, but rendering your own infused wine, syrup and bitters is immensely rewarding. If the prospect sounds daunting, it shouldn't. Bitters and vermouth may seem like exotic, esoteric ingredients, and they can add beguiling complexity to cocktails, but they're fairly straightforward to make. That is, once you're armed with walnuts, wine or rye, bitters and an assortment of herbs, fruit peels, herbs, dried fruit and seeds that you can pick up in most natural-foods and herb stores.

The most costly ingredient is patrician. Bitters require weeks to mature, and it takes months to realize the flavors of some de mission — or home-infused wines. Yet, if

you get to work now, by the time the Mass bloom you'll be ready to stock bottles you stocked every during winter's long nights.

Then you can pour a glass, fill a plate with pastries and salty cheeses and toast to your foresight (inside the balmy weather).

If you can't wait that long, some of the elixirs detailed here make for the perfect winter drink: a Manhattan, Sazerac, cracking

## Bitters

For early Americans, "taking some bitters" was a daily morning ritual. Within much of the household table were tiny vials of Chossas — often tobacco, rare or brandy — infused with such "medicinal" ingredients as juniper berries, mint, dried orange peel, ginger, fresh berries and magnesia. These elixirs were believed to stimulate the digestive system, among other organs, and often had exhilarating names: whiskey sours, loggarter and timber dropple along them.

Bitters' fortunes have risen and fallen with the decades, but they're currently undergoing a full-on revival, with dozens of brands hitting the market in the past few years. Once you begin using bitters in your cocktails, you may get addicted to snapping up unusual bottles made with flavors such as rhubarb and elder.

It's just as easy, and cheaper, to make bitters at home, and their versatility makes a black canvas onto which you can project your wildest flavor fantasies. Nearly any botanical, dried or fresh fruit or herb can be considered: lemongrass, rose hips, juniper, lemons, dandelion. The only other things you need are cleaned and a tight stopper bottle. Wrap your chosen ingredients in cheesecloth for a few weeks, and they're good to go.

My personal darling of the moment is Woodford Reserve Spiced Cherry Bitters, so I decided to make my own version. But I added a few twists: cardamom. Whole

sour grapes call for dividing your ingredients into layers before blending — for flavoring agent (such as peach leaves or rhubarb), the spice element (such as cinnamon or pepper) and the bittersing agent (usually gentian or wormwood), this method is easier for the novice — including me.

## Cherry-Cardamom Bitters

1/2 cup dried cherries  
1/4 teaspoon dried cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon cardamom  
1/4 teaspoon black peppercorns  
1/2 vanilla bean  
2 tablespoons gentian (this can be hard to find, try Wissotzky's Purple Cluster Herbs, or substitute milk thistle or dandelion)  
1 cup rye whiskey

Pit cherries and other dry ingredients into a ball jar, then top with rye. Shake to

blend and store in a cool, dark place for two weeks, shaking once daily. Decant into sterilized bottles. Bitters will keep for up to a year, and do not need to be refrigerated.

### Homemade Infused Wine (Vin de Maison)

The apéritif tradition may be more prevalent in France than in the U.S., but the below-average ritual of sipping a light, refreshing Spritz — such as Fasolé — seems rather tame or cliché. It deserves to be enjoyed everywhere. If you’re around apéritifs in a French scene, they might include a vin de maison, or a house-made wine that has been infused with anything from young peach leaves (*feuilles de pêche*) to green walnuts (*feuilles de noix*) to cherry leaves (*bauguettes*).

Most of these leaves and fruits are distinct reminders in the depths of winter, but, since the key to making a vin de maison is sealing it away in a dark place for months to develop its flavor, the time is right to make vin d’orange, or rose wine (left) to infuse with orange peel and spices until it becomes a spicy-sweet, refreshing liqueur.

Vin d’orange is traditionally made with white Sancerre orange, but given the difficulty of finding those, sweet orange is a decent substitute. Combine their peels and poms with a bottle of dry rose, vanilla, cinnamon and sugar and let the mixture sit for 40 days. You’ll be rewarded with a drink that’s been a staple of the early evening in France for centuries.

### Vin d’Orange

- 1 750-milliliter bottle of dry rose wine (a Provencal is perfect)
- 4 oranges
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 2/3 cup sugar
- One wide-mouthed glass container
- Self-cooling bottle

Preheat oven to 200 degrees Fahrenheit. Peel two of the oranges, removing the white pith, and dip each in the oven for one hour. Press juice from the two peeled oranges, then mix the remaining two into wedges.

Combine wine, pith, poms, wedges, vanilla bean, cinnamon and sugar in a large glass jar, cover and put in a cool, dark place. Shake once every day for about a week and sugar dissolves. After 40 days, strain the wine through muslin into a nonreactive container and discard solids. Decant wine into a self-cooling bottle, label with the date and stash away again for two or three months. Once opened, the vin d’orange will keep in the refrigerator for up to a year.

## THE MOST COSTLY INGREDIENT IS PATIENCE: BITTERS REQUIRE WEEKS TO NATURE, AND IT TAKES MONTHS TO REALIZE THE FLAVORS OF VINS DE MAISON.



### Vermouth

If the only vermouth you’ve ever tasted is labeled Martini & Rossi, you’re missing out on a world of delicious flavors. While cheap vermouth is terrible for basic martinis and Negronis, hand-crafted, artisanal vermouth can bring those same drinks to stellar heights.

What is vermouth, exactly? Wine that’s been fortified with a hard spirit and flavored with herbs, spices and roots, sometimes-dates or even! Sweet vermouth is often rust-colored with basilicous, spicy, sometimes figgy notes —

a tart winter liqueur when served over ice (dry vermouth is lighter and more savory, offering subtle hints of herbs and botanicals).

Vermouth makes other jealousy guard their recipes, but most start with white wine and a flavoring agent such as wormwood. While wormwood can be hard to find locally — some herb stores have it both dried and in tincture — anise seed can be used as a substitute. I used the following recipe to create what should have been sweet vermouth, but the end product’sasty flavors fall between sweet and dry. One of the many virtues of vermouth is that you can experiment with each on its own — try your own combination of peels, spices and dried herbs.

### Sweet Vermouth

- 3/2 cup granulated white sugar
- 3/2 cup turbinado sugar
- 3/2 cup plus 2 teaspoons water
- 3/28-ounce bottle dry white wine (I used République from the Picardie Géorgie or Le Bourg will do)
- 3/2 teaspoon wormwood leaf, or a dash of wormwood tincture
- 3/2 teaspoon cardamom seed
- 3/2 teaspoon dried orange peel
- 2 vanilla pods
- Pinch of dried cinnamon
- Pinch of white peppercorns
- Pinch of dried orange
- Pinch of dried basil
- Pinch of fennel seeds
- 3/2 cup sherry
- 3/2 cup brandy

In a saucepan, heat sugars and 2 teaspoons of water over low heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture begins to turn brown and caramelized, about five minutes. Remove from heat and let cool. Strain.

Pour 2 cups of the wine into a saucepan, add all spices and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for five minutes, then remove from heat. Once cool, strain the infused wine through muslin to remove solids, squeezing to extract the flavor. Discard solids.

Heat 1/2 cup water in a saucepan and slowly spoon in concentrated sugar, stirring until incorporated into a simple syrup.

Combine infused wine, remaining wine from bottle, sugar syrup, sherry and brandy in a self-working glass bottle. Tint over several times to combine, then label and refrigerate. Vermouth is ready to consume once combined, but its flavors will improve with time. Sweet vermouth will keep for up to a year in the refrigerator. ☐



JAN 9-11 THEATER

# Sparks Fly

**R**ichard Klovdayl is much more than the title of his one-man show. *Just a Welder* suggests. He's also an actor and author of the essay collection *Hardhat Liberal*, which rambages blue-collar philosophy. Klovdayl has met a colorful cast of characters during some 30 years of traveling between construction sites from Alaska to Puerto Rico to California to Vermont—where he now makes his home in Brattleboro. These comrades and coworkers inspire hilarious on-stage anecdotes. In a comedic and sometimes political performance, Klovdayl grants audience members access to a trade where the smallest details command the greatest attention.

## JUST A WELDER

Thursday, January 9, 8:15 p.m.; Friday, January 10, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, January 11, 8 p.m. at Valley Players Theater in Woodstock. \$22. Info: 802.457.1818. [valleyplayers.com](http://valleyplayers.com)



JAN 13 | WORDS

## Food for Thought

For Abigail Carroll, the adage "You are what you eat" refers not just to food but the love, when and where of mealtime traditions. In her book *Three Squares: The Invention of the American Meal*, the food writer considers the intricate relationship of breakfast, lunch and dinner, asserting that "the shape of a meal is also the shape of society." Carroll examines the evolution of daily eating rituals from colonial times to the present, identifying influences such as the Industrial Revolution and the advent of processed foods and smoking culture. Carroll illustrates why knowledge of the culinary past is key to understanding its future.

### ABIGAIL CARROLL

Monday, January 13, 7 p.m. at Community Library of Lamoille, 1500 Main St., Middlebury. \$10. [therisquereads.com](http://therisquereads.com)



PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. STONE



















# Capital Cajun

Spice on Snow Festival brings Louisiana heat to chilly Montpelier

BY GARY MILLER



BRUCE MEKELY

**D**ropping on your perspective, January in Vermont might represent a climactic blessing that enables a glorious marsh of recreational adventure, or a hellish, violent beast that grips you to its goss for all of the most miserable days of the year. Either way, you might want to consider a visit to Montpelier this weekend, where the Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture's Spice on Snow festival offers a musical — and gustatory — respite from winter's coldest month.

Space on Snow is the fourth annual end-of-winter festival for the Summit School. Since its inception in 2011, the event has doubled from two to four days, and expanded from a music slate of all-local performers to one drawing nationally known players for a series of concerts and multi-instrumental workshops.

This year's headliners include the Revelers, a Lafayette, La., Cajun ensemble based on HBO's post-Katrina epic series "Treme" and Anthony Bourdain's "No Reservations." They'll hit Montpelier Town Hall on Friday, January 10, for a Cajun dinner, concert and dance.

Sharing top billing is Bruce Mekely, a legendary old-time fiddler who has been nominated for two Grammys and whom David Anger — no slouch in the strings section himself — calls "the Bumbershoot of Appalachian fiddle." Mekely will perform Saturday, January 11, at the Unity Church downtown Montpelier.

Other musical guests include Phineas, NE-based old-time musicians Rachel Sartain and Ilene Newton, and Vermont's own eccentric old-time master Pete Satherfield, who'll be playing the festival's finale with Brooke Chock and Friends. Spice on Snow also offers free coffeehouse shows with local groups Good Old Wagon, the Kiebar Family Band and the Turning Circle.

The Cajun theme pervading the festival has its roots in the musical explorations of Summit School founder and board member Katie Trout, who's been traveling to Louisiana for the past five years to perform, first with the Kick 'em Jenny Stringband and then with Montpelier rocker Jay Eids.

Trout describes her adventures, which center on Lafayette's Blackfoot Festival, as an immensely learning experience. And

during her time there, she's befriended a number of Cajun musicians, including members of the Revelers.

Reached by phone at the Ashokan Music and Dance Camp in the Catskills, where he's teaching at an annual New Year's workshop, Revelers bassist Eric Frey seemed quite pleased to be making the journey to Montpelier despite its northern locale. When informed of the current weather conditions, he chuckled.

"People say 'What you can't stand is the lead of winter down in Louisiana,' but every year we come up with some sort of winter tote, so we are pretty accustomed to it," said Frey. And, he added, it's easy to get warmed up at a Cajun performance, because Cajun is about participation.

"It's a very used music," continued Frey, who grew up in a musical family in Louisiana and started picking bluegrass guitar at age 5. "Whether you are going into the mix and playing some tunes with everybody or participating by dancing, or just hanging out at the bar drinking a beer and having a good time," he said, "it's not the kind of music you want to sit around and just watch."

Those who don't want to sit around and watch Cajun dance steps needn't worry: The Revelers regularly travel with dance instructor Garry Dorche, who'll be offering free lessons just before the Town Hall show, and, according to Frey, there's a side benefit to learning the steps: "Once you can dance to Cajun, you can dance to anything."

In addition to the free dance class, Spice on Snow includes more than a dozen 90-minute workshops in Cajun, Zydeco, country and old-time music, at a cost of \$10 to \$15 each. Offerings include old-time fiddle and banjo, Cajun/Zydeco accordion, harmonica singing, Cajun guitar and a more in-depth class. Everyone, from neophytes to master veterans, is invited to participate.

At most traditional Cajun events, music is only part of the picture and the role of food can't be overstated. In fact, the name for the Blackfoot Festival comes from east-

ern cowboys used to winter up a good gambo. Spice on Snow will bring the heat to the kitchen courtesy of Lafayette chef Toby Rodriguez and Montpelier's New England Gourmet Institute.

Rodriguez, who has appeared on "No Reservations" and "America's Top Chef," has taught the intricacies of Cajun cooking as far north as Alaska. And when he visits Montpelier for Spice on Snow, he plans on putting a whole hog in a caissons when he calls "extremely hands-on" cooking workshops.

On Friday morning, Rodriguez will lead a class in South Louisiana-style hog butchering at NEGL's College Street location. He'll follow it up on the afternoon with a class on cooking traditional kick-ass meat. That class will form the centerpiece of a Town Hall meal preceding the festival's concert.

On Saturday at NEGL's School Street location, Rodriguez will work with students to make Cajun sausage and smoked meats. Later that day, he'll collaborate with students on bouillabaisse and hog's head chowder. The products of these classes will be served at a dinner before Spice on Snow's Saturday night concert and in a five-course brunch Sunday morning at Three Penny Taproom.

Rodriguez, a sculptor and furniture maker who has never treated himself as a chef, emphasizes that if you cook it up at Spice on Snow, you'll learn the difference between various Cajun food and the real thing. "Most people, he says, equate Cajun with one type of spice. Salt. And they couldn't be more wrong. There's a whole array of spices that go into it." Rodriguez says.

With that, he might well be describing not only Cajun cooking, but the Spice on Snow festival itself. ☐

ONCE YOU CAN  
DANCE TO CAJUN,  
YOU CAN DANCE  
TO ANYTHING.

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## INFO

For more on the Spice on Snow festival including scheduling and ticket info visit [summitschoolvt.com](http://summitschoolvt.com). See calendar page 16.

# soundbites

BY DANI BOLLES



PHOTO BY DANI BOLLES

## In Memory of A-Dog

It was an outpouring typically reserved for the passing of the loved heads of state, or maybe a religious figure. But I suppose in Burlington, that's exactly what it was: the loss of a saint.

On Saturday, December 25, people from nearly every walk of Burlington life gathered on the top block of Church Street to mourn the passing and celebrate the life of **ANDY 'A-DOG' WILLIAMS**, who had died two days earlier after a yearlong fight against leukemia. It was just about the most beautiful thing I've ever witnessed.

If you are connected to Burlington in any way, you know that the 71-year-old struck a profound chord within the community. For one thing, at 38, he was far too young to leave us. It was never a fair fight, though. Williams would have been the last to say so. As his longtime girlfriend, **ANGIE FORTIN**, **REHAB**, told me in a recent phone call, throughout his illness Andy never complained or sought sympathy.

"He would have had every right to say, 'Why me?'" she said. "But he is never, ever that."

That's just how he was wired. I met Andy shortly after I started working at Seven Days in 2007. In 2008, his Burlington apartment was destroyed by a fire. Save for a couple of hours of saviors and some records, he lost virtually everything he owned. Andy came down to the TD office to talk about it. Or so I thought.

We sat outside on a bench. We spoke for maybe five minutes about the fire and an upcoming benefit concert. We spent the most time talking about music and our families. Before he left, he handed me a stack of CDs he had made. I still have them.

It was a special gesture to me. But if you know him, even just a little bit, the gesture was hardly unusual.

As I would come to find out, Andy was unusually generous with gifts, whether it was mementos for fans, promo gear for the dudes at the record shop from parties he played or, best of all, a smile and nod from behind the turntable or the well, just about everyone he was famous like that.

When he was diagnosed with leukemia in December 2012, and knowing how grave his disease was, Andy seemed to convey a sense that he would beat it. How could he not? This was a man who came from virtually nothing, a skinner-led raised by a single mother in a tattered, blue-collar Vermont town who made himself into one of the finest and most respected DJs in Vermont, if not the entire country. Ask around, it's true.

It's hard to comprehend just how long those odds were. Maybe short odds are installable in the chances of finding a bone marrow donor who matched his unique genetic makeup. But Andy beat those odds, too — twice, in fact, as two matching donors were found in the span of a week. We always thought he'd find a way to beat cancer, too. Because how could he not?

About a week before he passed away, Andy discussed at the Dana Farber Institute in Boston informed him that complications from his bone marrow transplant surgery — including infections and a lung fungus — had progressed beyond the point of treatment. The fight was over.

Told he had mere days to live, Andy looked each of his doctors in the eye and said a remarkable thing: Thank you.

"He shook their hands and thanked them for all they had done," said Angie. "Who does that?"

Andy passed away early on the morning of Thursday, December 26, at the Fairmont Stowdale house in Lincoln, Vt. It was uncertain whether he could even make the trip from Boston. But again, Andy defied the odds.

SOUNDBITES ■■■

# HIGHER GROUND

[www.h-theroundhouse.com](http://www.h-theroundhouse.com)

## TRUMBONE SHORTY & ORLEANS AVENUE

### JANUARY

**CLUTCH**  
THE VENUE, 8:30-10:30 p.m.  
**TROMBONE SHORTY & ORLEANS AVENUE**

**THE ALTERNATE ROUTES**  
THOMAS JOHN & BIRDS

**MARTIN SEXTON**  
THE SALTER FURNACE

**KID INK**  
MURKIN

**LOTUS**  
MURKIN

**LOTUS**  
THE MURKIN

**JOHN BROWN'S BODY**  
REIMS OF JETTISON

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**GREENSKY BLUEGRASS**  
TUNNELBEE & WANGDERS

**DAVE HAUSE**  
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**THE MACHINE**

**YARN**

**THE BIRDS**  
THE BIRDS

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For up-to-the-minute news about the local music scene, follow **@soundbites** on Twitter or read the **Live Culture** blog at [sevendaysvt.com/liveculture](http://sevendaysvt.com/liveculture).



# soundbites

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6



He hung on long enough for his closest friends to visit him on his deathbed and say good-bye. He died peacefully and, and *Jesus*. "He was surrounded by love."

In Burlington, Andy's passing sparked a phenomenon. For days, the Facebook and Twitter hashtags #Burlingtoniansnear and far were filled with pictures and music and videos of and for DJ A Dog. In the Queen City, the number of posts honoring Andy's death likely surpassed those about Nelson Mandela's passing weeks before.

And so we gathered on a chilly night in late December. Contrary to one media report, there were not "silences" of a sort. There were not handclaps. The mass of people huddled together, finally trying to keep our candles lit against the breath of the top block of Church Street, easily numbered more than 1,000. We listened to John briefly addressed the crowd, choking back tears and thanking us for being there — as if we were anywhere else. We listened to Lynn Caldaro, an old friend and musical colleague who had helped spearhead memorials held above and under the Friends for A Dog banner, informed us that Meyer Weinstegger

had predeceased August 30, 2014, to be Andy Williams Day in Burlington. Then someone blurted out the boom box.

Led by our hip-hop pad paper, we walked down the Main Plaza, slowly and in unison. But it was hardly another Shout if "AAA-Deej" could be heard the blocks in any direction. As we passed Rod Square, DJ A Dog's home away from home, cheers went up as heets flooded from the empty bar into the street.

We were told that the procession would continue down Main Street. And it did. Rather than navigate icy sidewalks, we spilled onto the street, walking 30 and 12 abreast and gloriously disrupting traffic as we made our way down the hill. The front of the procession stopped abruptly at the RCIO Center at the waterfront. When I looked back, a line of flickering lights could be seen stretching to the Shattuck Penitentiary, behind the Burlington Bay Market, past Main Street Landing and up Main Street, where it disappeared from view, but still continued for blocks.

We convened at the waterfront shelter park. After placing our candles in a snowbank outside the entrance, we filed

into the park by the ramp. A hot-air lantern was lit and released, briefly squeezing through a set of power lines before floating into the overcast sky and disappearing in the clouds. Then another took flight.

What followed was a series of elegies to a fallen friend, stories from fellow DJs, snowboarders, skaters and neighbors that were by turns touching, hilarious and heartbreaking. Later that night, mirthless abandonned in and around Burlington, Patrice R. and crew reprised their roles sipping with the *NEVER PUNK BAND* at Nectar's. There was a quiet moment at a rock show at the Massey House in which *NEVER PUNK* front man Matt Peary asked us to raise a glass. There were undeniably countless other smaller and more private benedictions throughout the Queen City and beyond that night.

When someone dies, we tend to emphasize the departed's best qualities — their easy smile, their selfless generosity, their vibrant spirit. It's a coping mechanism. By choosing to focus on and magnify those aspects of someone's personality, we remember people as we want them to be, even when that's not exactly true. No one is a saint, right? But if ever someone came close to sainthood in Burlington, it would have to be Andy Williams.

It's hard to overstate just how remarkable a human being he was, how broad was his reach. It's equally hard to grasp how much he will be missed, how much he gone to our small community and how much better off we are for having known him.

We love you, Andy. Rest in peace. ☺



### Listening In

It's not what's on the radio that matters, it's what you play. Here's what...

**BLIND FAITH**, *One Night in My Life*  
**BUDDY GUY**, *Blues in the Night*  
**DAVID BOWIE**, *Diamond Dogs*  
**JOHNNY & PRIVATE FILMS**, *Rockin' Like You*  
**THE CURE**, *The 7th Heaven*  
**THE LEEFERS**, *The Lefthanders*



## Featured Burlington Shows

**SATURDAY 1/17, 8PM...**

**SWEAR AND SHAKE**

\$10 ONLINE, \$12 AT THE DOOR

**"POLKSY FOOTSTOMPING ROCK"**

— NEW YORK TIMES

**THURSDAY 1/22, 8PM...**

**TOWN MOUNTAIN**

\$8 ONLINE, \$10 AT THE DOOR

**"HARD DRIVIN' CAROLINA**

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[www.valleystage.net](http://www.valleystage.net)



## The April Verch Band

Fri Jan 17, 7:30 PM

Canada's Ottawa Valley meets old-time Appalachia with rustic fiddling, electric step dancing, and great vocals

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- Fiddle Workshop
- Fri Jan 17 7:30 PM
- Ottawa Valley Step Dancing Workshop
- Sat Jan 18 11 AM
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[used, yup, still free]

**SEVEN DAYS**  
[sevendaysvt.com](http://sevendaysvt.com)

BY ANDREW COHEN

01/13/09 07:16 AM

BY ANDREW

BY MUSIC

## music

### CLUB DATES

NOT AVAILABLE, ALL AGES



SAT 11/11 SWARZ & SHAW (END OF POLE)

**Now Hear This** Here's our first bold prediction of 2009: If you haven't already heard New York's SWARZ & SHAW, you will soon. On the heels of a stirring 2007 record, Maple Ridge, and recently supporting genre contemporaries the Larceners and Delta Rae, the band is beginning to make the kinds of ripples that often generate waves. Catch them, while you can, at the Slaney Pencos in Burlington this Saturday, January 18.

10:30 PM 4/30/09

**SWARZ & SHAW** Burlington One [house]

10 p.m. free

### central

**BABIES** indie/alt/indie/folk [Anchorage] 8 p.m. 10/10/08

**CHASIN' B-SIDE** indie/alt/emo [Portland, Oregon] 8 p.m. free

**DEBBY PANCARO** indie/indie rock [Seattle, Washington] 10 p.m. \$10, \$8 wks.

**DEWYTH PELLES** indie/lo-fi [Portland, Oregon] 10 p.m. free

**ELIJAH'S BAR** Loop Music with Opening Act: More Colors [Beld] 7 p.m. free

### champlain valley

**SEVEN** indie/alt/emo [Burlington] 7 p.m. free

**CITY LIMITS** indie with Topical Entertainment [St. Johnsbury] 7 p.m. free

**ON THE BIRCH BARKER** Open Mic 7:30 p.m. free

**THIS BROTHERS TAVERN** 24 Course [house] 10 p.m. free

### play-ellsworth

**BOB'S BAKES** indie/alt/rock [Montpelier] 7:30 p.m. free

**CLASSE A RESTAURANT & BAR** Korean/Korean [Montpelier] free

**THE HAB PIZZERIA & PUB** indie/alt/emo [Montpelier] 6:30 p.m. free

**OPEN MIC** 7 p.m. free

**MORRIS'S PLACE** open Mic 7:30 p.m. free

**PARKER'S PUB** indie/alt/emo [Montpelier] 7:30 p.m. free

**regional**

**MONGOLIA** the tracks [Montpelier] 8 p.m. free

**MONSTER JAMES** indie/rock [Montpelier] 8 p.m. free

**THURSTON** Thursday Thunders with DJ NYCE [100.9 FM] 10:30 p.m. free

### FRI. 10

**burlington area**

**INDIEFEST PUB** indie/emo [Montpelier] 9:30 p.m. free

**CLUB HETZKORN** indie/alt/emo [Burlington] 10:30 p.m. free

**DRIVE** indie/emo [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**DRY** indie/emo [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**ENDLESS JUNGLE** indie [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**JOHNSON AT HOTEL VERNON** indie [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**JOHNSON** indie [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**INDIEFEST HARRIS LORING** indie [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

### champlain valley

**BLK PIGS** garage rock [Montpelier, Vt.]

**CITY LIMITS** indie/emo [Montpelier with Noize] 10:30 p.m. free

**DR. THE BEEZIE BAKER** leather-clad blues [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**DR. BROTHERS TWINS** indie rock [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**ROSE & BEEZIE** indie [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**HATTHAMMER** indie/emo [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

**INDIEFEST HARRIS LORING** indie [Montpelier] 10:30 p.m. free

</div

# REVIEW this

## Ausable Killings, *Dead Bods*

RECENT RELEASE | DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

According to Bradelaine — and later Roger “Vermin” Kent in *The Good Suspects* — the greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn’t exist. But after spending time with *Dead Bods*, the latest from Vermont’s Ausable Killings, I would submit a slight alteration that Mephistopheles’ most devious plan is his ability to reinvent himself. Sure, the most famous image of Satan is with red skin, black horns and a pitchfork, but this incarnation for countless artists tributes, especially of the heavy metal variety. But *Dead Bods* suggests he is at his most dangerous as the Trickster, appearing in ways we’d least expect.

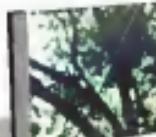
*Ausable Killings* is a solo project of Teleport’s Adam Fuller and Sean Martin. For fans of that band’s breezy, light-rock leaning, AK may indeed prove too fiery at times. However,

those who fondly remember Mama’s acclaimed metal band *Domino* will find a lot to like. In fact, on a very basic level, AK is sounding like a hybrid of *Domino* and Teleport: black metal heart with blue-eyed soul. The results are startlingly disorienting and endlessly interesting.

The album begins appropriately enough, with “Saturne Danse” — a ethereal intro that evokes Emerson in the Sky and us on raid with a campfire from the *Walks*. “Afric of Vegease (Waly)?” (Martha, I have some terrible news...) Then AK explodes in a crush of delineate, sludge guitars and drums. Above this, Martin unleashes a melodic boner with, eventually yielding to pulverizing double bass drum assault.

“Devil’s Garden” is next, with Martin adopting the high-toned accouch of a classic metal singer. Fuller, who handles all the album’s instrumental duties, surrounds his partner with a gauzy mix of guitars, drums, wavy filin samples and — wait for it — machine gun fire.

Following the deft subversion “Spectre of the Serpent,” AK offer the record’s gauziest twist, “Die.” There, AK depicts Satan seducing a helpless



girl over a twisted pile of R&B slerv jams, which is a jarringly but appealingly stark.

“Well, girl, pretty girl,” sings Martin in a chunky falsetto style borrowed from Beck’s “Tebra.” “Will we wait to see the... in this there and this.”

It’s that sort of gaudy, slasher-thick banter, couched in a shifting cloak of musical trickery, that characterizes *Dead Bods*. In *Ausable Killings’* idle hands — the Devil’s playthings, doncha know — eternal damnation almost sounds like fun. Which is precisely why it’s so dangerous.

Dead Bods by Ausable Killings is available at [ausablekillings.bandcamp.com](http://ausablekillings.bandcamp.com).

— GABRIEL RODRIGUEZ

REVIEW BY DAN BIRSE  
TO LISTEN TO TRACKS



## WDY, *Take You Home*

RECENT RELEASE | DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

WDY is the pseudonym of Cleveland DJ and producer Matt Woodward. For several years, the 20 year old native has been crafting tracks in his St. Albans bedroom, honing his craft until he finally had something to show the world. *Tale No. 1*, his 12-track debut EP, is the fruit of these labors: dense, atmospheric, and rooted in a variety of sounds and styles.

Woodward’s freshman cutting effects a tantalizing glimpse from a promising young artist that captures as his obvious talent, yet reveals he’s still got plenty of room to grow.

Woodward draws a wide array of influences, from the electro-pop indie stylings of bands such as MGMT to hip-hop mogul Kanye West to wacky house phenom Skrillex. Floating elements of each of these artist styles sit Woodward’s hotly auto-tweaked —



especially *Auto-Tune* testament to his ingenuity and dexterity. Woodward never seems constrained by genre worship, as many young artists often are. Rather, he uses inspiration as a foundation on which to build his own sonic structures — often only so near than back down.

*Tale No. 1* works as something of an open love letter to Woodward’s surroundings. On the album’s first two cuts, “St. Albans” and “Vermont,” he paints atmospheric sonic landscapes, making stormy electronic beams with almanic wordless vocals — the last enveloped in swirls of Auto-Tune that suggest that will spent with recent *Jawbreaker* records, especially his latest with Volcano Chari.

Through the record beats almost as discordant as lyrical content, Woodward imparts a sense of isolation and melancholy that should be familiar to anyone who has endured Vermont winters. Even in the album’s more danceable moments, such as the down-tempo “Streets (Leveling)” and the electro show piece of “The Weekend” — the latter presumably inspired by Canadian artist the Weeknd — Woodward maintains a chilly atmosphere.

The only bane on *Take You Home* are a few occasionally clunky cuts and one or two jarringly transitions. But these minor blips add a certain hand-made appeal, a welcome warm quality amid this inventory of coldly inorganic sound. And that runs to the essence of what makes Woodward’s debut as inviting as his heart.

*Tale No. 1* by WDY can be streamed at [soundcloud.com/wdy-music](http://soundcloud.com/wdy-music).

— GABRIEL RODRIGUEZ

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# Double Vision

Johanne Durocher Yordan at Vintage Inspired

**V**ermonter artist Johanne Yordan chose an interesting point in her artistic journey to stage her current exhibition. Without looking at the labels of the works on view at Burlington's Vintage Inspired, a viewer could be forgiven for thinking two artists were sharing the show. That's because Yordan's exhibit is bifurcated. On one side of the room we find collage-paintings dominated by bold, earthy poppies painted over layers of torn ephemera, and a few stylized sunflower paintings with subtle, more decorative collage elements. On the opposite wall are abstract paintings in earthy palettes whose compositions follow the logic of linearity.

Artists are not required to stick with one style or medium, of course, and there is no reason to believe that Yordan is not happily pursuing floral and abstracts simultaneously. Both paths are compelling for different reasons, and so are her artworks. In fact, on her website Yordan writes, "Many of my paintings are well planned while others are impromptu."

But she also writes, "As I continue on my journey of abstract painting, I find more fascination and freedom to explore and experiment." Yordan's trajectory seems to be toward more abstraction and greater freedom of expression, and that liberation may well cause her to leave flowers and carefully composed collages behind.

But she does, they're worth a closer look. In this show, Yordan includes eight poppy paintings in sizes from 10 inches square to four feet tall. Regardless of their dimensions, these vermilion or orange flowers do "pop" visually, and their vibrancy is appealing, especially in the dead of winter. While not rigidly realistic, the blossoms are fairly true to form with their ruffly edges and carry stems. The pigment is transparent enough to allow Yordan's backgrounds to peer finely through. In "Poppy '06" and "Poppy '07," a pair of similar 18-by-24-inchworks, that backdrop consists of torn pages of poetry, handwritten notes with lace penmanship, monogrammed postcards and the like. These are prettily enough to look at, yet Yordan's surface treatment renders them threadlessly smooth like molecular gastronomy rather than beguiling the collage, sending the distinctive elements of it flying. Accordingly, the viewer chose to gloss right over them.

Yordan's paintings featuring poppies and maps are more effective — because



Courtesy the artist



Courtesy the artist

**A VIEWER COULD BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKING TWO ARTISTS WERE SHARING THE SHOW.**

they are compositionally simpler, and because the contrast is greater between the in-your-face blossoms and the minuscule, pastel geographies. Still, both components are grounded in the earth. There is quite literally a sense of place in these works — particularly in the 48-by-30-inch "On Route" which employs Vermeer maps. The place names are familiar, yet maps by their very nature suggest travel to parts unknown. Perhaps to "Across the Lake" (20 by 36 inches), which after four poppies and fragmented maps of upstate New York

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it's not evident in what order Yordan painted these pieces, but some are more successful than others. The 18-by-12-inch

"Second Chance" may have a significant title, but the painting itself is rather ugly. The primary color is a slate brown, made sultry in places by white, a lagoon of pale green meanders in the center and a smattering of white, bushy blobs broken the composition horizontally just below the middle. In addition, unattractive kanga is a variation of shapes have been affixed to the canvas and painted over; thick, watery droplets of paint protrude and smear surfaces. The work is a definite departure from elegant flora, but it tries too hard.

Yordan moves in a more promising direction with "Discrepancy" — whose dominant color is sage green, with elements of black, white and mustardy gold — and with two companion pieces titled "Marmots in Discrepancy" (#1 and #2), which play with brown, gold and rose. In each of these the artist explores the interplay of vertical and horizontal, mostly using wavy, roughly brushed strokes like blades, layering and cutting into the paint. She new terrain she ground is broken here, but Yordan's experimentation continues.

"Chaos" aptly named, goes the artist in on the integrity of the grid but, the painting appears to be dismantling, which gives it a sense some of the other works lack. Yordan has built an uneven structure of chocolate-brown blocks — an implied grid, perhaps, with some of the "bricks" missing. Broad vertical strokes of white paint run down on this structure, softening the edges of the blocks. Collage seems imminent. There short, thick strokes begin here but not quite at the top of the painting, an effectively unsettling choice. Behind the white curtain is a wall of ochre, blenched by splotches of brown. The curtain is obscured in shadow, slightly curving lines shooting downward as if from an explosion.

Despite the frenetic palette, the painting commands attention, and Yordan's intuitive embrace of "chaos" is an exciting development.

PAMELA POLSTON

## INFO

Johanne Durocher Yordan: paintings and collage, at Vintage Inspired in Burlington through January 31. [vintagelive.com](http://vintagelive.com)





**Kate Gridley** In an era when clichés are arguably the most common images of young people, it's unusual to see paintings of almost-adults — never mind life-size oil paintings. Because, you know, they take a long time to create. Vermont artist Kate Gridley de-hustles gratification in her series entitled "Passing Through: Portraits of Roaming Adults." She's been rousing the large-scale works — acrylic, richly painted figures against stark white backdrops — around Vermont and the week brings them to the Amy K. Turner Gallery at the Flynn Center in Burlington. Her 17 subjects represent a range of beliefs, sexual identities, socioeconomic statuses, health issues and life experiences, but what they all have in common is their stage of life. "Passing Through" marks moments in which emerging adults transition to reaching their silver and then their "vessel," Gridley writes on her website. The exhibit opens with a reception on Friday January 10, at 5:30 p.m., and will be on view through April 12.

## BURLINGTON ARTIST SHOWS & FESTS

### Central

**WEAR YOUR SHIRT ON SUNDAY** With objects, photos and video installations, the Burlington-based exhibition features work by local artists and others from Vermont, Massachusetts and the rest of the country. *Extravaganza* (www.extravaganza.org) is at the University of Vermont's Gund Gallery, 23 University Street, Burlington, January 12 through December 21 at the Flynn Center, 111 University Street, Burlington, January 12 through April 12.

**BUDGET FINANCIALS** *Successful Roads by Design*, an exhibition of 100 oil and acrylic paintings by Vermont artist Michael H. Smith, is a survey of his work from 1980 to 2005. *Take This Econo* (www.budgetfinancials.com) is at the Budget Financials office, 1000 University Street, Seattle, January 21 through April 12.

### EARTH 21-PRISE: RAMPANT EXPANSION HERE

**EXHIBITION: AWAKENING** Artists from around the Earth are transforming artmaking to address the environmental crisis. *Artists for the Earth* (www.artistsfortheearth.org) is at the Vermont Art Center, 100 University Street, Burlington, January 12 through April 12.

### HOLIDAY 2009

**BEAUTIFUL WORLD** *Worlds* is a global exhibition of artworks by 100 international artists. Through January 31 at the Fine Arts Presenting Company, 100 University Street, Seattle, January 21 through April 12.

### INTERFACING THE INTERSTITIALS

**COMPOSING** Interprets four artists with very different backgrounds (Hans Haacke and Tania Bruguera, among them) through the lens of the Internet. *Interfacing the Interstitials* (www.interfacingtheinterstitials.com) is a collective, mostly free participation piece that creates the illusion of the Internet's highways systems as a shared landscape of culture and youth culture. Through April 12 at Vermont History Museum, Montpelier. Info: 802.436.3500.

### JAMES R. AND MARY KATHRYN

**ARTIST** The annual rotating members, *James R. and Mary Kathryn*, are a group of Virginia-based artists and their spouses. They have a long history of making and "giving" art. Through April 12 at Big Seven Gallery in Montpelier. Info: 802.863.3812.

### JONATHAN PERRIERES

*Our Observations*, *Antibodies* (www.jonathanpierres.com) and *Antibodies* (www.jonathanpierres.com) are the latest environments by the Vermont artist. Through January 16 at Central Vermont Medical Center, Rutland. Info: 802.783.0200.

### JAMES PHARAS

*Start and Pause* (www.jamespharas.com) depicts segmented environments that are as interactive as they are contemplative. Through January 25 at The Contemporary Barlow & Fils, Rutland. Info: 802.783.4502.

### ROGER CARMICHAEL

*Flowers and Birds* (www.rogercarmichael.com) is a series of 100 small oil paintings of flowers and birds. Through January 25 at the Vermont Art Center, 100 University Street, Seattle. Info: 800.448.2616.

### SHAKERS: LANDSCAPE

*Shakers* (www.shakers.org) is a traveling exhibition of 100 oil paintings by Vermont artist Johnnie Bouchard. Recent installations have been at the Flynn Center, Burlington, and the Vermont State Fair, Montpelier. Upcoming: *Shakers* (www.shakers.org) at the Vermont Art Center, Montpelier. Info: 802.388.3000.

### SIGNIFYING FASCISM

*Exhibit 1* (www.exhibit1.org) includes *Out of Bounds* (www.outofbounds.org), a collaborative exhibition by Burlington artist Johnnie Bouchard, Fletcher Institute for Visual Arts, University of Vermont, and the Flynn Center. *Exhibit 2* (www.exhibit2.org) includes *Shattered* (www.shattered.org) by artist Michael Heizer. Through January 25 at Fletcher Institute for Visual Arts, University of Vermont, Burlington. Info: 802.656.2100.

### TOM BERRIMAN

*Passing Through* (www.berriman.com) is an exhibition of 100 oil paintings by Vermont artist Tom Berriman. A portion of sales will benefit the Vermont Institute of Natural Science and the Vermont Institute of Natural Science's Science in Schools program. Info: 802.863.8500.

### THE VINEYARD STORY

*Artistic Evolution* (www.vineyardstory.org) is an exhibition of 100 oil paintings by Vermont artist Tom Berriman. Through January 31 at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science's Quabbin Center in Waitsfield. Info: 802.863.8500.

## champlain valley

**CONFEDERATE PICTURES** A visual history exhibition for *Problems* (www.problems.org) features 100 artworks by 100 artists from the American South. The exhibition, which includes a catalog, is at the Flynn Center, 111 University Street, Burlington. Info: 802.863.3800.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE: NEW ENGLAND** *Shifting Terrain*, *Divine* and other cultural traditions that define New England are being examined in this exhibition. *Border to Boundary* (www.border2boundary.com) is at the Flynn Center, 111 University Street, Burlington. Info: 802.863.3800.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE: SMALL STATE SPACES** and *big* by Vermont artist Michael Heizer. *Small State Spaces* (www.smallstatespaces.com) is at the Flynn Center, 111 University Street, Burlington. Info: 802.863.3800.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE: ABSTRACT** *Paintings by the Vermont artist* (www.theflynn.org) is at the Flynn Center, 111 University Street, Burlington. Info: 802.863.3800.

## newspaper

**ANNE YOUNG** *Miner's Trilogy* (www.youngart.com) is at the Flynn Center, 111 University Street, Burlington. Info: 802.863.3800.

**CATS AND TIGERS AND TURTLES OH MY** *Artwork by Vermont artist Scottie Miller* (www.millergallery.com) is at the Flynn Center, 111 University Street, Burlington. Info: 802.863.3800.

## photography



## Tom Berriman

Tom Berriman's artwork is for the birds. So prominent about avian photography is he that he employs a technique called digiscoping: shooting through a camera attached to a spotting scope. That's helped him to take seemingly up-close-and-personal shots of feathered folk all around the wildlife refuges and management areas in northeastern Vermont. As a board member of Northeast Kingdom Audubon, Berriman leads frequent birding trips throughout the year, and he is a fellow and staffer at St. Johnsbury's Fairbanks Museum, as well. All this knowledge and experience has helped him exhibit his bird photographs on view at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science's Quabbin Center in Waitsfield. Info: 802.863.8500.

**THE VINEYARD STORY** *Artistic Evolution* (www.vineyardstory.org) is an exhibition of 100 oil paintings by Vermont artist Tom Berriman. Through January 31 at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science's Quabbin Center in Waitsfield. Info: 802.863.8500.



**Kelly Holt** Her mixed media paintings are on exhibit at River Arts in Montpelier titled "Where." Vermont artist Kelly Holt says she drew inspiration from Paul Gauguin's painting "Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?" That 1897 oil, created in Tahiti, ostensibly represents the stages of life. If symbolic, Gauguin's painting is figurative, which radically distinguishes it from Holt's abstraction. Looking at them, viewers might not guess that she is "addressing how turbulence changes direction in a plowed path." But why not? Whatever we see is her layered surface of acrylic, oil, graphite, pencil and patches of loom paper, the looking is a most engaging visual journey. The exhibit opens with a reception Thursday, January 9, 5-7 p.m., and extends to March 9. Priceless. "Dancing Barefoot,"

**KENT SHAW** Color photographs taken in Montpelier, Emma and Lambeth. Through January 26. at City's Artworks & Art Barnsellers. Info: 432-8650.

**MARK HOGAN: REMBRANDT'S WOMAN** **DAI** **LEADERY** Around the 1650s Rembrandt painted a series of three portraits of a woman, likely his close friend and maid. The series culminates in three versions, the last and most famous painting, "Woman in an Armchair." Through January 27 at Vermont's Info: 802-223-5903 and [rembrandtvt.info](http://rembrandtvt.info).

**THOMAS SPUDICH'S GLOWING WEEKS** Photography and video by recent post-bachelors, photographic students and video by recent seniors at the University of Vermont. Through January 27 at 999 Gallery at UVM's Center for the Visual Arts. Info: 802-545-2016.

**WILLIAMS & HOLT** "Revolutions," *Yardville*, painting. Through February 20 at Forest Mountain Art Center in Stowe. Info: 802-259-2323.

**ROB THOMAS**

**PAUL MURKIN** "Our Frequent Guests," sculptures and prints on paper by the British artist and author

have come to describe seeing the Earth from space. Through February 26 at Burlington Museum & Art Center at UVM's Info: 802-545-2024.

**SIERRA FIELD** "Cantina Feminista" makes the Vermont art scene. Through March 15 at Burlington Museum & Art Center. Info: 802-545-2024.

**reviews!**

**JOELLE DE PALM INSTITUTE** A year-long exhibit of contemporary printmaking by the French-American organization. Through April 15 at Member Museum. Info: 802-545-2024.

**SPLENDID & VEGAS: ART & MUSIC FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO BARBECUE IN VENICE** An exhibit featuring approximately 150 artworks, objects, documents, and performances by artists, musicians, and chefs, including the first edition of *The Face Stamps* by Vhils. Through January 26 at Marlboro Museum of Art. Info: 802-265-2000.

**STUDIO SELECT SHOW** Made by emerging students in ceramics, graphic design, painting, photography, costume design, illustration. Through January 31 at University of Vermont Art Museum. Info: 802-545-2024.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS!

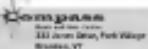
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# movies

## August: Osage County ★★

**I** hope your holidays were joyful. When the offices at *Entertainment Weekly* close during the leisure season, it's great to have a staff's well-earned break, it's the only week of the year I don't have a deadline to meet. You'd think our having a day to review major awards = welcome vacation for my brain, but that's not what happens.

What happens is, I certainly see my movie films than I normally would. It's the holiday season, so, let's be around screens for me. The final round of *Critics' Choice Awards* voting is right around the corner. (Catch the live broadcast Sunday, 8:30 p.m. on the CW Network.) And we're developing our review and talking *George Clooney's* ass off.

For *Your Consideration* DVDs have been pouring in since October, and the race for consideration is the list of them we're屏ing. Over the break, one of the pictures to which I've been giving a great deal of consideration is *August: Osage County*. Clooney produced it, and the question I feel compelled to ask is: Why, George, for the love of God, man, why?

It is perhaps the year's most joyless drudging dad — a remorseless father and a failure of a man — one of the pictures to which I've been giving a great deal of consideration is *August: Osage County*. Clooney produced it, and the question I feel compelled to ask is: Why, George, for the love of God, man, why?

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**DR** SIGN THIS PAGE  
WITH THE LETTERS  
TO THE PHONE, THURSDAY  
MIDNIGHT

Directed by John Wells (the Company Men), Wells' two-hour adaptation of Tracy Letts' three-and-a-half-hour Pulitzer-winning play stars Meryl Streep as Viola Weston, a pill-popping Oklahoma matron who's watched *White Heat* of Vermona many, many, many times. "I'm just math nothing," she claims to family members who've gathered around following the disappearance of her husband (Brent Spiner), an atherosclerotic post-mastectomy. But she's also the least thing that's interested in. Viola has a drawl, and words like other weapons of choice.

Set in 2000 and marketed as "the year's most wicked comedy," the movie's light, on-the-light, and buoyant on butt-bumping family dysfunction. Its atmosphere is an extended cluster scene in the course of which the scattered matrarchs team up to have three daughters (Julia Roberts, Julianne Nicholson and Alison Lohman), fronting on their flaws and misdeeds. In the process, everyone from Eric McCormack to Cheyenne Jackson to Dennis Hopper to Alfre Woodard to Margo Martindale to the suddenly mephitic Meryl Streep. (Clooney is served up as a sidebar.)

For the first half hour or so, Streep's talents as a whiner kick in, good-natured, fat. But the script by Letts' penman is much



MARSHALL'S String is over the top in its caricatured and over-the-topness, but it's also a movie about a less-than-satisfying dysfunctional family.

of the play that the matrarchs' bitchy shenanigans and super stage — like something Eugene O'Neill might have written for the Lifetime channel, or the movie industry, family excess, addiction, divorce and, of course, little lessons. *Yours*. The matron hour and a half likely would've made a more interesting movie.

The best moment is the first *Shapur* opening by quoting from T.S. Eliot's 1935 poem "The Hollow Man": "Life," he intones, "is very long." You come to understand how someone

surrounded by such living hellishness would feel that way and never for a second question his decision to make an early exit. You may well decide to make one yourself.

And — speaking of Eliot — Wells, Linn and the rest of *Osage*'s cast had a hellish time at their Oscar half in effect re-enacting one of his classics with this freak show's lotus of crossbreeding, civic busing and orgiasts. April, once the "cruelest month," can't hold a candle to that stage.

RICK KISERAK



REVIEWS

— but he's not bad at home. (He does after all, try to bring that cast home.)

And like Bruce Palka, Llewyn gets an unexpected wake-up call from a fellow urinal (of sorts) played with great gusto by Julianne Moore. How he's a determined just moreover, supremely contemptuous of folk with whom Llewyn's career's ride to Chicago — but he's not bad at home.

It's not surprising, considering his overall congenitally bad attitude and the way he's always been in the minority. (In one way, *Inside Llewyn Davis* is a movie that established the Coen brothers' career as a minority of one.)

The characters clearly may offend our sense of what seems to "real" people, but it's hardly unknown in the review world to say, in other words, *Inside Llewyn Davis* is the 1960s film that established the Coen brothers' career as a minority of one. Meryl Streep's role as a Matronly highway rest stop blushing there least edgy and the matronish (produced by Tiffanie Butts) is highly latable.

But in *Inside Llewyn Davis* — his latable — she makes less convincing. He's not as effectively Meryl's matronish act. Mr. Turturro's character nor is he a greater the Bob Dylan (singled out in one sense) who can reverse all the roles. In short, Llewyn is the kind of artist we are still never to forget and still often in real life a talented sia ria. The Coen brothers toward such understandings find, yes, interesting. Regardless of their fidelity — or lack thereof — to the book's story they've created a vivid character and given his due.

MARGOT HARRISON

## Inside Llewyn Davis ★★★★

**W**hen screenwriters constantly practice work as strong as that of brothers Joel and Ethan Coen, audiences may be tempted to overanalyze their every film as a definitive statement. No, we'd like to think, that *Inside Llewyn Davis* has prompted critical reexamination on the significance of folk music in America. We know, in the wake of that jazz piano, comes a small swirl of backlash from former hubots of the culture reinvigorated in the movie, the early '60s Greenwich Village folk scene.

A recent post on the New York Times' *Critics' Corner* quotes singer-songwriter Christine Lavin as saying she "was hoping that [Llewyn Davis] was 'contrived' to find that Llewyn Davis the Coen's folksinger protagonist [was] based on real musicians like Van Morrison, who in real life made classic '60s folk records." Not so.

Welcomes to the world of the Coens, whose characters (the basic conceit) are usually described as "odd." Looking for definitive anything in *Inside Llewyn Davis* seems like an incongruously losing battle approach to two filmmakers who have always revelled in pastiche, irony and the changing of drag, usually with memorable dialogue. *August: Osage County* isn't one of those greatest films. But as a distinctive Coen entertainment, combining grotesque mirth and unceasingly wry

irony — but it's not bad at home. (He does after all, try to bring that cast home.) And like Bruce Palka, Llewyn gets an unexpected wake-up call from a fellow urinal (of sorts) played with great gusto by Julianne Moore. How he's a determined just moreover, supremely contemptuous of folk with whom Llewyn's career's ride to Chicago — but he's not bad at home.

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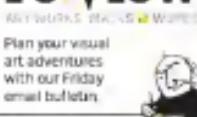
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# SHOWTIMES

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## BIG-PICTURE THEATER

MOVIES TO CONSIDER (HIGHLY  
RECOMMENDED)

INDEPENDENT — *Parasite* 9  
FRENCH — *The Ballad of Dr. M*  
*The Desolation of Smaug* 10  
*The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* 10

INDIA — *Mothers 10*  
AMERICAN — *Hidden Figures* 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 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GARRETT HEDlund

MOVIE PLAYING NOW

**PARADISE LOST** (Universal) (The) (drama) Penelope Ann Miller stars in a fact-based courtroom drama that follows a woman (Linda Lavin) as she tries to expose the corruption of the Catholic church in the 1960s.

**SAVING MR. BANKS** (A) (Disney) (drama) Emma Thompson plays Mary Poppins' author P.L. Travers in this charming drama about her conflict with Walt Disney over the book's movie adaptation. The biopic also stars Emily Blunt as Travers' wife and Emma Thompson as Travers' friend. (125 min. PG-13)

**THE ACT OF KILLING** (Kino) (drama) Anja Uebel plays a woman who becomes a guerrilla soldier during Indonesia's 1965-66 mass killings. (100 min. R)

**CLIFFS OF CROATIA** (Fox) (drama) This movie and its predecessor (2011's *Cliffs of Moher*) are the best travel movies ever made.

**THE WOLF OF WALL STREET** (Sony) (comedy)

Leonardo DiCaprio plays a slick, conniving and party-animal Jordan Belfort in this raunchy Martin Scorsese-directed drama that's a wild, career-making performance from DiCaprio and a supporting turn from Matthew McConaughey, Jonah Hill and Alan Arkin. (125 min. R)

**THREE WAYS TO MARRY** (Fox) (comedy) This movie makes the case that there's more to love than just sex.

**THE CLASS** (Fox) (drama) This movie is a must-see for anyone who's ever been to a prep school.

**THE WOLF OF WALL STREET** (Sony) (comedy)

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## MOVIES YOU MISSED & MORE

BY MARGOT KERHORN



Berberian Sound Studio

You've never seen the "in-lab" side of a movie studio. The secret of horror

**G**UY BERBERIAN (Doby Jones), a small British sound engineer known for his work on art-house and children's programs, has been hired to snare a brutal Italian-Bosnian warthog in the Balkans. Argentinean

He's way out of his depth in the Italian studio. The pompous producer (Carmelo Russo) and feckless director (Antonio Mancino) pull their ears at Guy's shyness and squeamishness. The secretary gives him the runaround when he tries to get his expenses reimbursed. And he just can't get used to the boozed Foley artist, known as Mozzie and Masturb, who snorts cocaine in approximate snarling barks.

Surrounded by the sounds of mayhem, Guy starts to imagine himself the author of a young actress doing AIDS (Furna Molakajad), who clashes with the producer over the volume of her screams.

*Movies You Missed & More* appears on the *Live Culture* blog on Fridays. Look for reviews and when possible, movie interviews on [vermontarts.org/liveculture](http://vermontarts.org/liveculture).



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## fun stuff

**MORE FUN!** STRAIGHT DOPE (P20) CROSSWORD (PC 5) & CALCDOKU & SUDOKU (PC 7)

## ERIE EVERETTE



DAKOTA MCFADDEN

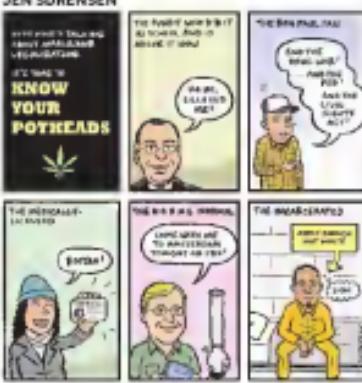


## LULU EIGHTBALL

### HOW COLD IS IT?



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**Curses, Foiled Again**

Trust Fund Match, 43, was in the process of robbing a bank in Modesto, Calif., when owner Bill called out, "Hi, Troy." The teller recognized Match because he'd been in the bank a month earlier to apply for a car loan. After Match left with \$5000, bank officials showed Match off's application form to police, who arrested him at the address he'd given. "Most people make more of an effort to hide, when you make or have a getaway vehicle," Lauren Horwitz of the U.S. Attorney's Office said, "but he had nothing" (Stockton's Record).

**Star Quality**

An Indian merchant named Chanderbhai posted a billboard in Tamil Nadu intending to honor the late Nelson Mandela. The sign showed a photo of actor Morgan Freeman instead of one of the South African leader. Freeman portrayed Mandela in the 2009 film *Inception*. The merchant blamed the mistake on the billboard designer. (Agence France Presse)

**Flash with Wealth**

Workers cleaning a Jet Airways aircraft at Kolkatta, India, found 240 gold bars worth more than \$840,000 that had been left in the laundry. Regional authorities disclosed that cleaning crews here tend "scores" of similar discrepancies, which are connected to missing

glings operations. A passenger carries the gold aboard an international flight bound for India, hides it in the laundry and leaves it there when exiting the plane to claim his suitcase. The thief steals it from a suitcase in a domestic flight. A new passenger retrieves the gold and carries it off the plane because customs officers don't check domestic flights. (Bloomberg's *Market*)

## MEDICAL RESEARCHERS HAVE DEVELOPED A ROBOT BUTT.

**Cage Rattlers of the Week**

The Nathaniel Right Project filed four lawsuits asking a New York state court to establish the "legal person hood" of chimpanzees and afford them basic rights and to be held captive for entertainment or research. Chimps possess "complex cognitive abilities that are as strictly protected when they're found in human beings," Steven Wise, president of the nonprofit declared. "There is no reason why they should not be protected when they're found in chimpanzees" (Reuters)

**Anal of Medicine**

Medical researchers have developed a "robot butt." The device is designed to train student doctors to give prostate exams, according to its inventors, Drs. Benjamin Low and Carla Fugh. The plastic prostate is hooked up to a video screen featuring a virtual male named "Patrick" who is bent over a desk. "The mannequin is instrumented with force sensors that can measure where the student is examining and with how much pressure," Low said, adding that Patrick even measures eye contact between the student and the virtual patient to help improve bedside manner (The Huffington Post)

**Litigation Nation**

A citizens group is suing the city of La Jolla, Calif., demanding that it eradicate the "bol, notorious and deformed" left by birds and sea lions defecating on the rocks below residential overlooking scenic La Jolla Cove. Critics for Oceans-Nature Abhorrence blame the foul smell on city officials, who two years ago approved a fence to keep people away from the rocks. Since then, birds and marine mammals have flocked to the site. The lawsuit抱怨s that sea lions particularly have made the problem "worse" because they're using strong-smelling substances on the rocks. Removing the fence, the lawsuit contends, would let people climb on the rocks and,

by doing so, chase away the birds and mammals to defecate elsewhere (Los Angeles Times)

**Waste of Taste**

"The chief cause of food waste in the United Kingdom is fancy shoppers," according to the supermarket chain Tesco. Officials reported that in the first six months of 2013, in U.K. stores alone, more than 30,000 tons of edible food that consumers rejected because they "always pack the crisps of the crop" and turn down old or misshapen produce, regardless of whether taste is affected. "Customers will shop more the choice of the one that aesthetically looks better," said Simon, Tesco's food sourcing director, told a House of Lords panel. "That's a very difficult reality for us," by contrast, Simon noted, Eastern European consumers made willingly accept less than perfect-looking food. (Bloomberg's *Market*)

**Lost We Forget**

After movie star Paul Walker died in a car crash, Scottish authorities reported that a car burst into flames during a gathering to honor Walker organized by a group of car enthusiasts. Police charged a 39-year-old man with causing the fire, which began "after revving the engine for 20 minutes in tribute" (Scotland's *STV*)

**BLISS** BY HARRY BLISS**TED RALL**

# RED MEAT

lethargy's leading strip

DEAR THE ANARCHIST OF  
MAX CANNON

I can't believe it. I had meat every time  
down again last night for the third time.

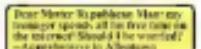
Maybe it's a psychic sign of it coming? True

Just I have been so. I could use some  
good methadone to get all them bad habits  
off the first of any underscores settle down.



# THIS MODERN WORLD

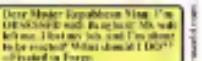
## Ask Mister Republican Man!



by TOM TOMORROW

Dear Mister Republican Man: My son is a scientist here in my town. He's frozen up for school without getting frosty! —Bleeding in Hartland

IS YOUR SON A DEMOCRAT? WE COULD BE DEVASTATED IF HE'S FROZEN! —Bleeding in Bensenville



# GLORKIAN WARRIOR

A COMIC STRIP BY

JAMES KOCHALKA

(GLORKIAN, LAUREATE OF VIGOROUS)

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why why  
WHY?  
is outer  
space so  
cold?

Why?

I'm sorry. There is  
a scientific answer  
but my response is  
it is all FROZEN UP.

I can't remember  
ANTHROPY.

Well, I don't  
KNOW.

Maybe we're  
frozen!  
OF COURSE  
WE'RE  
frozen!  
Dumb  
Dumb  
Dumb

Wait! Look  
over there!  
It's a  
WOT BOY!  
WE'RE  
SAVED!

What?  
Nooooo!  
It's FROZEN?  
FROZEN is  
NOT hot.

What?  
What?  
Another  
space/time  
paradox.

**THE END**



## Capricorn

Mar. 22-June 19

Can you guess what combination of colors makes the most viral viral trap set? Psychologists say it's black on yellow. Together they attract the eye. They can't ignore them. They entice a readiness to respond. According to my reading of the astrological omens, this is the effect you can and should have in the coming weeks. It's time for you to draw the best kind of attention to yourself. You have a right and a duty to galvanize people with the power of your presence. Whether you actually wear yellow clothes with black highlights is optional as long as you cultivate a similar potency.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19) You can take it, it's all the coming flattiness. You're not the one the progress stories or the epic stories or the housing song will get your stamp going to the bank. All I ask is that you're going to be the one to get it. It's going to do well and bring an unexpected twist. See, they are ready in your personal response to primal rhythms not in a chronic summer to vivacity or liveness. Fix all for you using your aggressive and central but not the heating kind of central.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) When is the last time you did an experiment? I'm not

taking about scientific trials and trials that take place in a laboratory. I'm referring to test an experimental idea, maybe just an unorthodox experience to see if it appeals to you ... or when you instigate a change in your routine to others' unpredictable blessings into your sphere. Now would be an excellent time to vapor yourself to a fine white ether that, you're certain, to have your eyes opened, your mind stretched and your mind blown.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20) To help take the edge off the flattiness you have been writing with it after you these lines from a poem by Kyi Pyeon: "The day is overcast / the love imagined / your voice / if I had / at assumption / I nothing is natural / when whatever / had I supposed / your smile / will probably return later in a new form. The writing form you chose may lead you to a third possibility is that's what you want? Or would you prefer that the last thing day left, the dead things step back? Make it happen soon.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 20) "Human beings are often unable to survive because we do not know what to ask for," says the writer Mikalojus Cesnys in this cool book titled *Spent*. "We are sometimes unable to get what we need because we do not know what we want." With that in mind, consider how you live your life. First, that in the real world you will work diligently to identify the greatest you want most, and second that you will cultivate your capacity to recover the greatest you want most by refining your skill at asking for them.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) Jane Margon (1917-1997) was the first woman elected as architect in California. She designed over 40 buildings in the cause at her beloved career and earned both fame and fortune. One key to her success was her tenacity. "I don't ever turn down a job because it's beneath me," she advised. "That's a helpful motto for you to bear in mind. It applies to the work-related opportunities you may be invited to take on as well as to those that your friends, associates and acquaintances ask you to consider. You won't possibly know what's what in importance in right away, but

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appy you're not too busy to do a reasonably small assignment.

**VICARIO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) One of Berklee's music teachers said, "As a composer he is hopeless." When Thomas Edison was in Berklee to teach, too, from his "old school" he knew anything. "What Edison wanted out of his education when he was young, but that he didn't have," Vicario says. "The system灌regarding that it's not good to be a composer, that it's not good to be a songwriter, that it's not good to be a producer." You may not have the best idea for the best song ever for marketing and enhancing that consciousness. "You may not have the best song ever," Vicario says. "But you have the best song ever," Vicario says. "You will definitely be clever enough to do a cool.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) As a child French philosopher and writer Soren Kierkegaard (1808-1855) loved math, but his father was home-schooled. His father had him figure out his own circumference by studying the inscribed circle. When he was 12 years old he solved himself in his room for days and immersed himself in mathematical research. When he emerged, he had figured out on his own some of Euclid's fundamental theorems about geometry. Eventually he became a noted mathematician. I see the coming weeks in prime time to be something like the young Kierkegaard: deal yourself away from other people's opinions about who you are supposed to be and explore the themes that will be crucial for the person you determine to be.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) In 1609 Dutch sea explorer Henry Hudson sailed to America and came upon what we now call Cape Horn. There it was a barren spit of land where many instances were visited. But it was eventually turned into a bustling port on "Inhabitant playground," according to the documentary film. Henry landed by the early 20th century there were three sprawling, industrial, ports, packed with 10 square miles of land, a fleet of fishing trawlers, industrialized iron to the moon, the largest herd of elephants in the world, and parchment showing the Crucifixion. The End of the World, with Hell! I remember this. Scapple became 2014 could restore you very own

Henry Hudson's legend, a time when you will discover virgin territory that will ultimately become an investment playground.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) You need wings and have them. Some of them would be clever enough to be creative. "My winged sister whenever Henry Wood directed that I might be an accompanist for some people, I said, 'I don't know if I will be able to do that,' and she said, 'You can do it.' Your original imagination will be working even better than ever. Your instinctual tendencies are likely to serve as reliable guides to who listen. Trust what your body tells you. You will definitely be clever enough to do a cool.

**ARQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) I'm guessing in a metaphorical sense, you've been mistreated by a female. Now you're biting your lip in the head's head. Here's my prediction: You will set like the Roman Janus, who underwent a more literal version of your experience. The whole eventually expected him allowing him to return to his studio and repeat — and your story will have the same outcome. What should you do in the mean time? Here's the older that Kim Albergola gives in his poem "Things to Do in the Time of the Wheel": "Catch the fox," he says. "Look up and look up through the spout. Make untilt. Fly with the broken heads of fishing boats. Pout like a mackerel. Cough and sneeze. Organize your calendar. Define the beach. Rewrite each of your Men's midlife choices. Find the evidence of those before you. Listen for the sound of your heart. Be mindful that you are free, customized with all that where you can rest, and wait."

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20) How do you like your team? Smart, intense and dynamic? Or, resource, driven and low-pressure? Here's another question: Do you prefer to pack and the tasks you like, making sure they're good fits for the precise lessons you want to master? Or do you find it more exciting and adventurous, like, like, like, determine when unpredictable tests get sent your way? Narratives about these matters, Pisces. You're due for a nice big fest sometime soon, maybe in your interest to keep sharp and clever, have everything under

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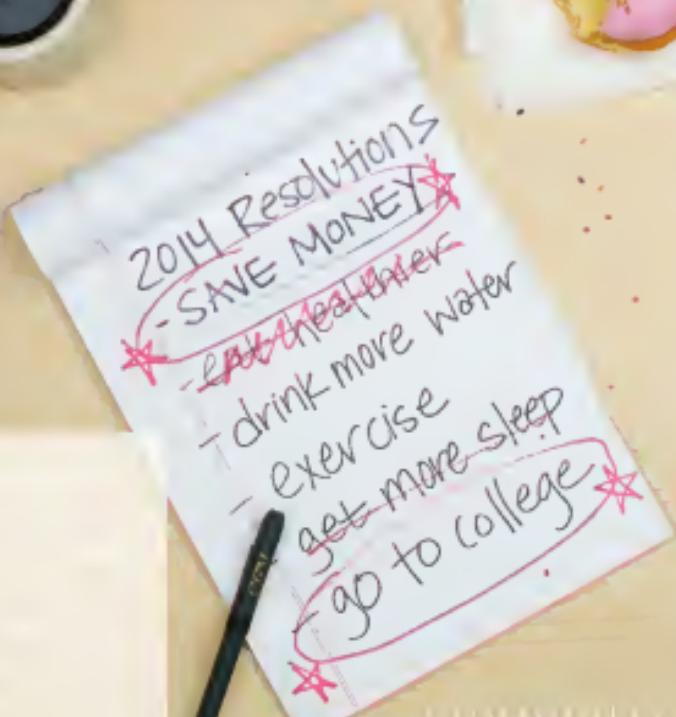
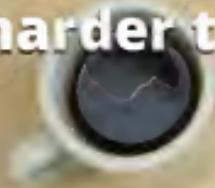
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